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August 2018

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The Art of Elizabeth Darrow

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1205 Great Oaks Drive · Landfall · $2,995,000

New construction on the Intracoastal Waterway in Landfall. This spectacular coastal design by Logan Homes features the sought after open casual floor plan with all the latest bells and whistles including stainless steel natural gas appliances, and HVAC, tankless hot water heater, super energy efficient spray foam insulation, Quartz Counters, Ipe decking, telescoping doors, 3 car garage, 5 bedrooms (including 2 master suites on first floor).

281 Beach Road N · Figure Eight Island · $1,995,000

Located on a high ridge lot overlooking the marsh and tidal creek in fabulous Figure 8 Island, this reverse plan offers great ocean views and convenient beach access across the street. This 4 bedroom 3 1/2 bath residence is nestled in the maritime live oaks and features multiple decks, an elevator, 2 car carport, outdoor shower, vaulted ceilings and over sized windows to take the views in every direction!

1529 Landfall Drive · Landfall · $1,595,000

Located on a high bluff overlooking the Intracoastal Waterway and Wrightsville Beach, this custom brick villa with standing seam metal roof offer the perfect combination of a casual floor plan and elegant finishes. From the welcoming curved stairs and travertine floors, to the coiffered ceilings, this home boasts a first floor master suite overlooking the ICW with his and her walk-in closets.

1004 Deepwood Place · Landfall · $860,000

Charleston porch over porch with side entrance overlooking 1/2 acre of landscaped grounds on Landfall's Jack Nicklaus designed golf course. (Membership available/optional). This all brick design features a combination of a traditional center hall layout with today's open kitchen/family room. With 4 bedrooms and 4 1/2 baths, there are 2 master suites (one on each floor) with a huge 3rd floor hobby/rec room.

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809 Fox Ridge Lane · Landfall · $615,000

Quality custom built by Ken Wrangell, this low country design features 4 bedrooms, 3 1/2 baths with an emphasis on quality! From character hickory finished in place hardwood floors, to three-piece crown molding, huge screened porch and fenced rear yard, this residence will pamper the buyer who wants it all.

239 River Ridge Drive · River Landing · $549,000

After passing through the gates of river landing you will find this gem of a home nestled next to the 16th green and pond. Vaulted wooden ceilings give this 4 bedroom 3 bathroom home a feeling of relaxed grandeur from the moment you walk through the front door. An open floor plan with intimate details such as the hot tub off the master suite make this the perfect family home.

1938 S. Live Oak Parkway · South Oleander · $1,795,000

Elegant yet comfortable, sophisticated yet casual. This completely renovated painted Georgian is perfectly sited on a private one acre parcel in the heart of mid-town Wilmington. One of Wilmington's most admired residential masterpieces, this home has been meticulously updated and lovingly maintained. From the gracious deep circular drive, one can feel the history of an era when quality and attention to detail mattered most.

2041 Montrose Lane · Landfall · $1,795,000

Located on two lots comprising 1.4 acres overlooking Landfall's Jack Nicklaus designed marsh course with views of Howe Creek, this immaculate 5400 square feet features 4 bedrooms, 5 1/2 baths and includes first floor master with elegant, updated bath and his/her walk-in closets. Mahogany paneled study, two-story coiffered living room, 3 car garage, and heated salt-water pool.

2017 Northstar Place · Landfall · $649,900

Beautifully maintained executive home in Landfalll. Open floor plan with cathedral ceilings. Large first floor master suite with separate sitting area and French doors leading to the private terrace with broken views of the Dye Lake. Hardwood floors, granite kitchen counter tops, updated fixtures with new hot water heater, 2 year old windows and a 7 year old roof.

137 Hallbrook Farms Circle · Porters Neck · $638,000

Located on a beautifully landscaped wooded lot overlooking the Porter's Neck Tom Fazio designed championship golf course (#5), this four bedroom, 4 1/2 bath home features three bedrooms on the first floor including a spacious master suite with his and her walk-in closets. Gracious 30' front porch with custom copper lanterns, gleaming hardwood floors throughout, and huge covered rear porch with a brick terrace.

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1500 Old Lamplighter Way · Greymarsh Crossing · $499,900

Beautiful sunset views over the marsh in this immaculate Greymarsh Crossisng home. Loaded with character and details including gentle arches, wainscotting, the world most charming study with bay window and built-in bookcases, updated baths and kitchen, including granite counters and stainless appliances. Enjoy outdoor living overlooking the marsh with expansive deck the width of the house and a screened porch.

1706 Fontenay Place · Landfall · $460,000

It's hard to beat the convenience and charm of Pembroke at Landfall. Located just inside the Eastwood gate, the lucky residents can easily bike to the beach, jog the loop or walk to our area's best shops and restaurants. This comfortable 3 bedroom, 3 bathroom townhouse condominium offers beautiful French country architecture with today's open floor plan, vaulted ceilings with loads of natural light.

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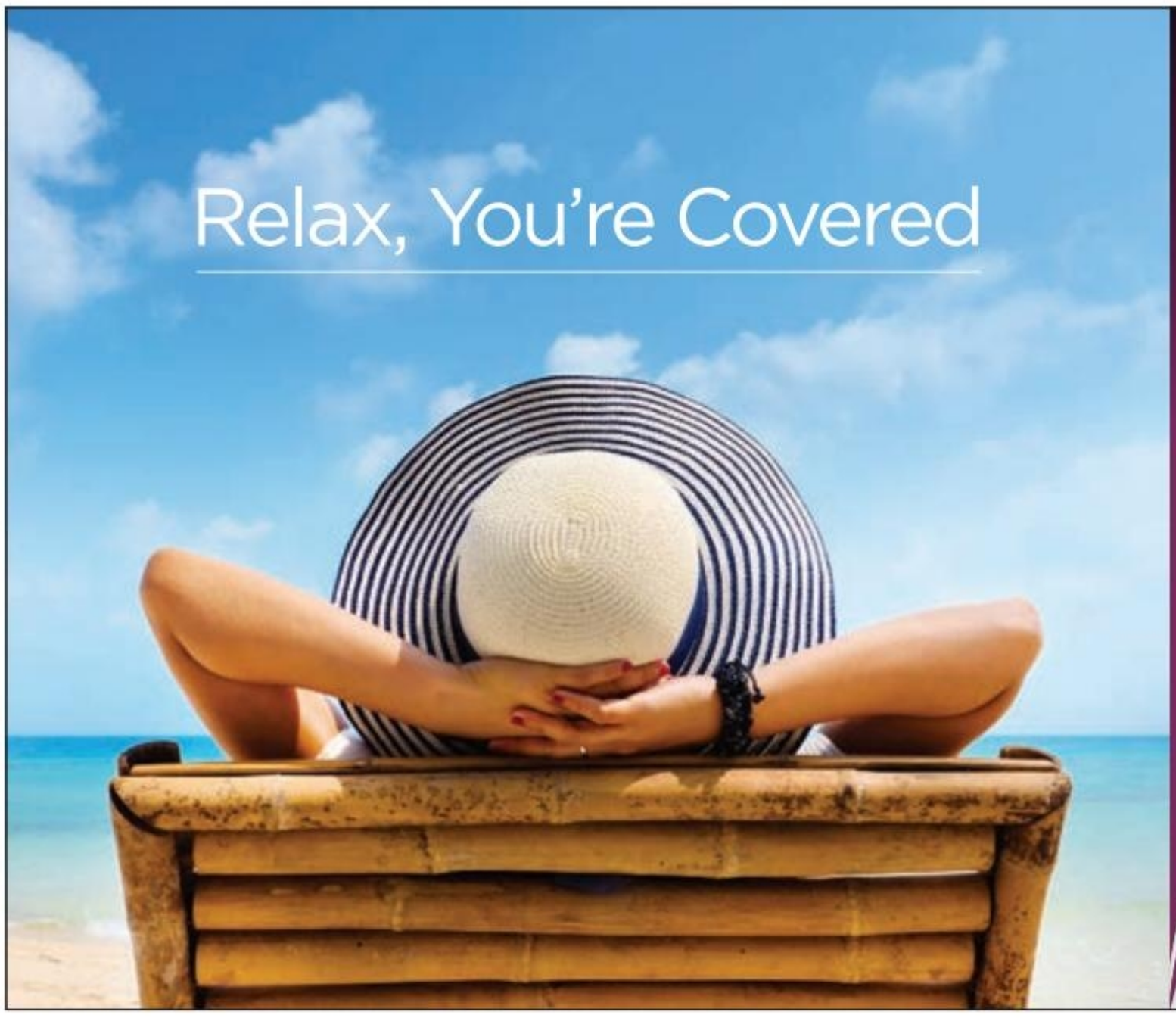

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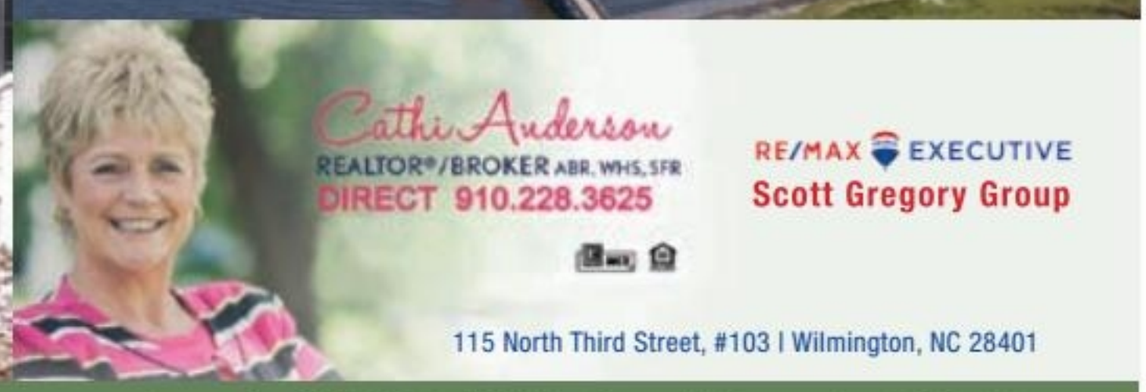

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Last Days of the Yard King

A final summer of innocence is shelter from the storm

By Jim Dodson

That July I owned the neighborhood. Or at least my block.

It was 1968. I was 15, towing a wheezing Lawn-Boy push mower behind a well-traveled Schwinn Deluxe Racer with chrome-plated fenders and dual side baskets. My mother called me Jimmy the Yard King.

Actually, I had three jobs that summer. One was mowing half a dozen lawns in the neighborhood at a time before lawn crews were commonplace and customers could phone your parents if they didn't like the job you did.

The second was a weekend job as an usher at the newly opened Terrace Theatre, where I was required to wear a snazzy tangerine orange, double-knit sports jacket with a black, clip-on bow tie. The jacket matched the theater's innovative "rocking chair" seats. My job was to keep kids from violently rocking their brains out and disturbing other customers by banging their knees. This often resulted in my giving chase to truants hopped up on candy.

That summer I also had my first job teaching guitar two mornings a week at Mr. Weinstein's music shop — for five dollars an hour, no less.

Given my combined income, my mom joked that she might have to someday ask me for a loan. I was saving up for either an Alvarez guitar or a Camaro, which ever came first.

The year 1968 has been called "The Year that Shattered America."

Looking back, it was the year we both began to lose our innocence.

Being a son of the newspaper world, I paid close attention to the news, read the paper daily and never missed Uncle Walter on his evening broadcast.

That year, for the first time, the Tet Offensive by the Viet Cong brought the horrors of the war in Southeast Asia home to 56 million American TV sets. On my birthday that February, I saw the iconic photograph of a South Vietnamese general publically executing a Viet Cong prisoner. The picture shocked Americans, stoked the anti-war movement and turned millions of Americans against the war. One month later, the My Lai massacre that killed more than 500 civilians but wasn't revealed and investigated for another year — all but finished off public support for the war.

That spring I taught myself how to play every song on the Beatles' *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* and started performing around town with my buddy Craig Corry who lived two doors away on Dogwood Drive. We wound up placing third in the city's teenage talent show that next fall and made an appearance on Lee Kinard's *Good Morning Show*, our first and last TV appearance.

On a breezy afternoon that April, I was playing golf with my dad when we heard that Martin Luther King Jr. had been assassinated in Memphis, Tennessee. We watched riots break out in Detroit and the Poor People's March on Washington, D.C. happen on TV. Commentators wondered if America was coming apart at the seams, heading for revolution in the streets.

I was more interested that the Broadway smash musical, *Hair*, featured live and fully naked people on stage. I couldn't fathom it but sure wished I could see it.

On the plus side that summer that America was going to hell in a hand basket, as Mr. Huff down the street always grumbled when I showed up to collect my $8 for mowing his lawn, I took Ginny Silkworth to the Cinema Theater to see Franco Zeffirelli's *Romeo and Juliet*. It was great. I fell in love with Shakespeare and, in a way, Ginny Silkworth. She was my first date ever. We grew up attending the same church group. Unfortunately my dad had to drive us to the theater, under strict orders not to say anything embarrassing.

After the movie, Ginny, a deep thinker with a warm and horsy laugh, wondered what I planned to do with my life. I told her I planned to write books, probably travel the world, play my guitar, mow lawns and maybe move to England. She punched me on the arm and laughed adorably. Ginny and I stayed in touch for decades. She went on to become a gifted schoolteacher in Philadelphia and passed away from breast cancer many years ago. I miss her still, especially her wonderful laugh.

Earlier that summer, Robert Kennedy was gunned down after winning the California Democratic primary. My mother really liked Bobby Kennedy. We watched his funeral train together and she actually cried. My dad was a half-hearted Nixon guy. My mom used to

joke that she did her patriotic duty by cancelling out his vote in the voting booth.

By July I was deep into my lawn-mowing life, guitar-playing, trying to forget what was going on in America. I hated the usher job at the Terrace so much I handed in my elegant orange usher's jacket in early August, blaming my family's annual beach trip to the Hanover Seaside Club at Wrightsville Beach.

We went there every year for at least half a dozen years, though this would be the final time. I loved the Seaside's unfancy dining room, its cool wooden floors and big porches where I could sit for hours in a real rocking chair and read. I read Graham Greene's *The Heart of the Matter* and *The End of the Affair* that summer, getting hopelessly addicted to his storytelling. I also finished John LeCarré's *The Spy Who Came in from the Cold*, picturing myself mowing a lawn in some far-flung, sun-mused outpost of the British Empire, a spy in short pants, enjoying a gin and tonic with some sultry blond who looked like Tuesday Weld.

That week a family from southern Ohio was visiting the Seaside Club. A pretty girl named Sandy was reading Edward Abbey's *Desert Solitaire*, bare feet tucked up in the rocker just down the porch. We struck up a conversation and took a walk on Johnny Mercer's Pier. Sandy told me that we humans were destroying the world, killing the oceans with our garbage and fighting an unwinnable war. She told me she was going to become an "environmental activist" like her aunt who was attending the Democratic National Convention in Chicago as a delegate from Ohio. The Seaside Club didn't have a TV set, so there was no way to see what was happening in Chicago. We heard, however, that there were police riots and lots of injuries at the convention when Chicago's mayor turned the police loose on Yippies and the Students for a Democratic Society who tried to crash the party.

For the rest of the week we were pretty much inseparable. Sandy was a year older and half a head taller than me. She was no Tuesday Weld but I liked her a lot. Like me, she was crazy about books and movies.

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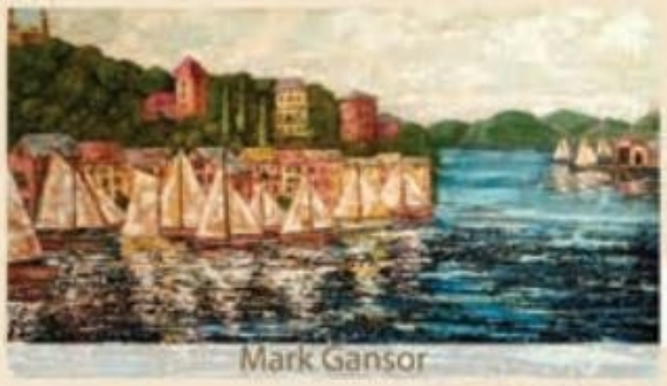
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The Graduate was playing at the Crest Theater in Wrightsville Beach. She suggested we go see it. That year the Motion Picture Association of America instituted its film rating service, serving as a guideline for parents anxious about a movie's content. I was worried about getting in. You were supposed to be at least 16 but the lady working the box office took one look at Sandy, then me, and let us in for a buck and a quarter each. Sandy didn't care for the movie but I loved it.

The night before her family headed home to Ohio, we talked until midnight while seated on a stack of canvas rafts stacked beneath the Seaside Club. My family was staying through the Labor Day weekend, our final days there. The next night, I gigged a huge flounder in the tidal flats off Bald Head Island and wondered if I would ever hear from Sandy again. She actually wrote me a couple of times and I wrote her back. In 1974, a F5 tornado flattened her hometown of Xenia, Ohio, killing something like 100 people and leaving 10,000 homeless. I never heard from Sandy again. I like to think she's somewhere in the world saving the planet.

Back home, with school starting, I still had a few weeks of decent lawn-mowing income to count on, plus teaching guitar for Mr. Weinstein. I knew all the dogs in the neighborhood, those which were friendly and those that weren't. I knew the better-looking moms, too. When you're 15 and King of Yards, you notice such things.

Looking back from half a century, life seems deceptively simpler then, so far away from the anti-war protests, the burning cities, the murder of visionary leaders, the riots, the raised fists at the summer Olympics, Nixon winning the White House, O.J. winning the Heisman.

"And stones in the road/Flew out beneath our bicycle tires. . . " as my favorite singer Mary Chapin Carpenter remembers in her beautiful anthem to that moment in America's life. "Worlds removed from all those fires/ As we raced each other home. . . "

I rode my bike everywhere that summer, pretty much for the last time.

I mowed lawns, ate my first Big Mac, kissed Ginny Silkworth and had part of me awakened by a spirited girl named Sandy. I taught myself to play every song on *Revolver.* I went to Scout camp for the final time, did the Mile Swim twice, finished off my Life Scout award, built a nature walk at my elementary school for my Eagle project. My Yard King days came to an end.

Fifty years later, I can remember these things like they happened yesterday, and wonder what a 15-year-old in America thinks about in 2018.

History, I've learned, may not repeat itself, but it certainly rhymes like a Mary Chapin song.

"And the stones in the road/Leave a mark from whence they came/A thousand points of light or shame/Baby, I don't know."

Contact Editor Jim Dodson at jim@thepilot.com.

SaltWorks

PHOTOGRAPH BY CATHERINE GREGORY

Surf's Up and Life Rolls On

Three important surfing events take place in Wrightsville Beach this month:

- On Aug. 11 and 12, the Wrightsville Beach Wahine Classic is open to female surfers of all levels and age groups for pro shortboard and pro longboard competitions, SUP surf, and the Teenie Wahine (girls ages 10 and under). Registration closes on Aug. 6. Admission is free for spectators. Various entry fees for surfers. Access 37 and 38, south end of Wrightsville Beach. For information and registration: wahineclassic.com.

- Life Rolls On, founded by world champion quadriplegic surfer Jesse Billauer, is devoted to improving the lives of young people affected by spinal cord injury. On Aug. 12 the group hosts They Will Surf Again, when hundreds of volunteers and people of all ages with disabilities come together for a day on the ocean. Admission: Free. Aug. 12, 7 a.m - 4 p.m. 2 Carolina Beach Ave. North, Carolina Beach. See website for full schedule of events. For information: liferollson.org.

- On Aug. 17 -19, the 13th annual O'Neill/Sweetwater Pro Am Surf Fest, presented by Wrightsville Beach's Sweetwater Surf Shop, will take place directly behind the shop at 10 North Lumina Ave. With a pro purse of $20,000, the three-day event is one of the largest surfing contests on the East Coast and attracts professional surfers from around the world. Registration closes Aug. 15. Admission: Free for spectators. Aug. 17 - 19, 8 a.m. Oceanic Street at the Atlantic Ocean, Wrightsville Beach. For information and registration: sweetwatersurfshop.com.

To the Lighthouse

Aug. 7 is National Lighthouse Day, and Old Baldy Lighthouse is hosting a daylong celebration. The Run for the Light 5K, 10K and 1-Mile Fun Run will take place on Aug. 5 on Bald Head Island to benefit the lighthouse and its programs. The day's running trails follow a scenic route through the island's beautiful coastal dunes and maritime forests. Also featured are BBQ, craft beers, games and more. Pricing levels vary for the race and admission is free to the festival. Aug. 5. 101 Light House Wynd, Bald Head Island. For more information: (910) 457-7481 or oldbaldy.org.

Those Summer Nights

The Wrightsville Beach Museum of History is a great resource — there is no better place to visit on a rainy day at the beach. And there is expansion in the works. The museum has received an unexpected donation: the 1924 Bordeaux cottage, which has been moved to a site adjoining the museum and will eventually provide valuable space for classrooms and community programs. Come help the museum celebrate on Aug. 26 at Lumina Daze, their benefit dance party and silent auction. And you have your pick of dance styles. Live music will be provided by both the Wilmington Big Band Dixieland All Stars (swing) and The Imitations (beach music). Tickets: $35. Aug. 26, 5:30 p.m. Blockade Runner Beach Resort, 275 Waynick Blvd., Wrightsville Beach. For information: (910) 256-2569.

Oakdale by Flashlight

Established in 1852, Oakdale Cemetery was a by-product of the rural cemetery movement in Victorian America, which envisioned landscaped burial grounds set in pastoral garden settings (even suitable for a picnic). Oakdale is North Carolina's first rural cemetery, and on Aug. 18, the cemetery's superintendent, Eric Kozen, and local historians Dr. Chris Fonvielle and Robin Triplett will lead an evening flashlight tour of the cemetery, which includes the graves of many prominent Civil War veterans and civic leaders of Wilmington. Bring your own flashlight. Tickets: $15. Aug. 18, 8 p.m. Oakdale Cemetery, 520 North 15th St., Wilmington. For information: (910) 762-5682 or oakdalecemetery.org.

PHOTOGRAPH BY KEN NEWLAND

Under the Boardwalk

Federal Point — the large peninsula that divides the Cape Fear River from the Atlantic Ocean — has been the geographic name of the region since at least the 1790s, when it can be seen on early Colonial maps. Founded in 1994, the Federal Point Preservation Society is a nonprofit organization open to anyone interested in the history of the region. On Aug. 7 the group will host a walking tour of Carolina Beach's historic Boardwalk. The 40-minute guided walk, which is offered every Tuesday in the summer months, will fill you in on such subjects as the true history of the shag, the early days of Britt's Donut Shop, and much more. Donation: $5. Aug. 7, 10 a.m. Meet on the Carolina Beach Boardwalk at the southwest corner of the new Hampton Inn. For info: (910) 458-0502 or federal-point-history.org.

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Chang and Eng

Legendary twins who called North Carolina home

By D. G. Martin

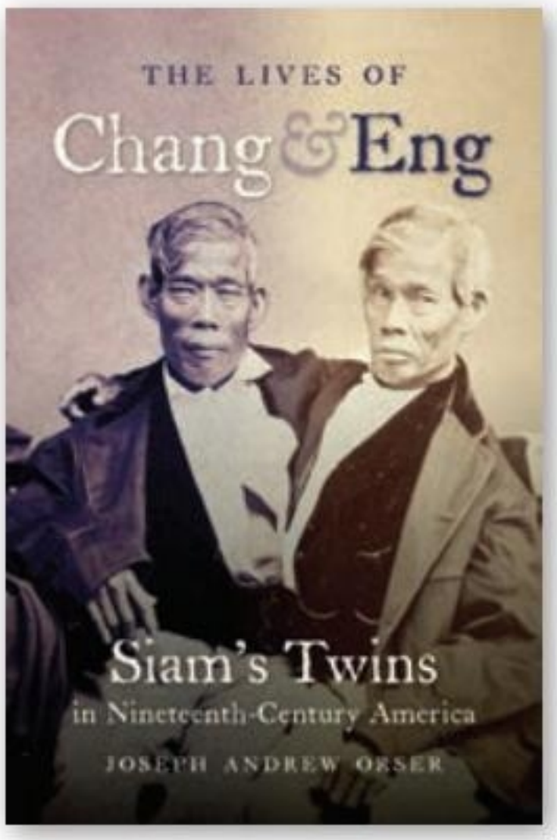
If I asked you to name our state's best-known citizen, living or dead, who comes to mind?

What if I said to think of people of who lived in Mount Airy?

I bet you would say Andy Griffith. After all, his still-popular TV show was set in Mayberry, which was based on his hometown, Mount Airy.

But long before Griffith was born, long before television, two world-famous men moved to Surry County farms near Mount Airy.

They were known in America and Europe as Chang and Eng, the Siamese Twins. Still today, almost 145 years after their deaths, people all over the world know about the two brothers, joined together from their birth in Siam (now Thailand) in 1811 until their deaths near Mount Airy in 1874.



In 1978, Irving Wallace and his daughter, Amy Wallace, wrote a popular biography titled *The Two: The Story of the Original Siamese Twins*. The Wallaces used their great storytelling gifts to entertain readers while laying out the details of the twins' amazing lives. After growing up in Siam, Chang and Eng came to the U.S. and were displayed throughout the country and Europe before settling in North Carolina, marrying sisters, and having more than 20 children between them. (See attached chronology.) Until recently, *The Two* had a virtual monopoly on the story, but two new books provide additional facts and a more modern examination of the twins' lives and times.

The newer books are Joseph Andrew Orser's *The Lives of Chang and Eng: Siam's Twins in Nineteenth-Century America*, published in 2014 by UNC Press, and Yunte Huang's *Inseparable: The Original Siamese Twins and Their Rendezvous with American History*, published earlier this year by Liveright.

Though the Wallaces covered the story in great detail, they wrote for Americans of the 1970s. Our attitudes about race, immigration and the exploitation of unusual human specimens have evolved. Orser's *Chang and Eng* re-examines the basic facts of the twins' lives and challenges earlier understandings of the meaning and lessons of their experience. Using the reactions of 19th century Americans and Europeans to the twins, *Chang and Eng* is more than a standard biography. It becomes an examination and evaluation of social attitudes about race, ethnicity, slavery, immigration, citizenship, and the exploitation of the unusual and deformed.

Orser recounts a host of interesting facts about the twins that his readers might have forgotten or never knew. For instance, the twins, though born in Siam, were really of Chinese origin. Their father was certainly Chinese, and their mother may have been partially Chinese. So why weren't they, and all other conjoined twins who came afterward, called Chinese Twins? It seems to have been a matter of 19th century branding. The explanation given by one of their managers, James W. Hale, was that they were "more likely to attract attention than by calling them Chinese."

After traveling all over the U.S. and Europe, why settle in rural North Carolina? Their 1839 decision was, Orser writes, "well orchestrated: it was not spur of the moment." In the big cities, he explains, the twins "were too closely linked to their public exhibition and their foreign origins; there was little room in the North for them to settle down to lives of quiet respectability."

After moving first to Wilkes County and later into adjoining but separate farms in Surry County, they became U.S. citizens, acquired and managed slaves, and when the Civil War broke out, they supported the South, each of them supplying a son to serve in the Confederate Army.

The twins were joined at their chests by a relatively short band of tissue. Today a surgeon could separate them but the doctors of the time were uncertain. There could have been other reasons, as well. As one of their doctors explained, "Those boys will fetch a vast deal more money while they are together than when they are separate." After their deaths, when the bodies were examined, some doctors concluded that one or both of the twins would not have survived an attempted separation.

In Huang's *Inseparable*, the author's personal background lends a special perspective. Like Chang and Eng, he grew up in Asia. After college at Peking University, he came to the U.S. and worked in the restaurant business in Alabama before completing his Ph.D. in poetics at SUNY-Buffalo. Living in the American South, he experienced challenges not unlike those that confronted Chang and Eng more than 150 years earlier. He sees the twins as fellow immigrants.

Huang uses the twins' lives to examine other features of American society during their lifetimes. He includes a long section describing the acrimonious relations between the twins and P.T. Barnum, the clever exhibitor of rare spectacles and weirder attractions who took advantage of Chang and Eng and the public. Huang writes that Barnum understood that the American nature was to submit to clever humbug, even when it flaunted the facts.

Huang compares Barnum to a "trickster" who is an engaging confidence man and a colorful figure ubiquitous in literature and film.

He dupes others and often dupes himself as well. The trickster does not know either good or evil. He is more amoral than immoral. He is a simple confidence man.

"In nineteenth-century America," Huang writes, "no one did it better than P. T. Barnum in turning confidence into entertainment; no one was a better trickster than the Prince of Humbugs."

To become an expert on Chang and Eng, ideally you would want to tackle all three books, but if you can only read one, Fred Kiger, Chapel Hill's inspirational Civil War and local history speaker, suggested in a recent lecture that you start with the Wallaces' old standard, *The Two*, to get the big picture. Then you will want to read the two new books for the rich, more modern perspectives they could bring to your reading table.

Chang and Eng Chronology

May 11, 1811 *Conjoined twins are born in a small fishing village in Siam (now Thailand). They are named In and Chun, which became Eng and Chang. Father is Chinese. Mother probably half-Chinese.*

1824 *Robert Hunter, a Scottish merchant in Siam, sees twins swimming, thinks of them as monsters with potential to attract paying customers in the U.S. and Europe.*

1829 *Sea captain Abel Coffin and Hunter form a partnership and enter into an agreement with the twins' mother to pay her $500 and to return the twins within five years.*

1829 *Arrive in Boston, where they are displayed to crowds. Appear in New York City and other places.*

1830 *Travel to England.*

January 1831 *Depart England and return to U.S. and resume heavy exhibition schedule.*

July 1831 *On vacation in Lynnfield, Massachusetts, twins are accosted by locals, charged with disturbing the peace and required to pay $200 bond.*

May 1832 *Upon reaching 21 years, the twins take charge of their exhibition program.*

1835-36 *Exhibition of twins in Europe.*

1839 *The twins retire to Wilkes County, North Carolina, build a house and open a general store.*

1843 *They become American citizens, adopt the last name Bunker, and marry local sisters. Chang wed Adelaide Yates (1823–1917), while Eng married her sister, Sarah Anne (1822–1892).*

1844 *Each couple has a baby girl, beginning families with a total of more than 20 children.*

1846 *They move to nearby Surry County, where they build two houses about a mile apart on adjoining tracts of land.*

1849 *The twins return to New York to exhibit and find difficult competition from P.T. Barnum.*

1853-54 *Tour makes 130 stops and covers 4,700 miles.*

1860 *They agree to be displayed by the hated P.T. Barnum for the "insulting amount " of $100 a week.*

November 1860 *Travel to California via rail, exhibiting in San Francisco and Sacramento.*

1861-65 *Owners of more than 30 slaves, they support the Confederacy. Two sons who serve in Confederate Army are wounded and captured.*

Dec. 5, 1868 *Under an arrangement with Barnum, twins depart for Great Britain.*

1869 *Mark Twain writes a humorous story inspired by the twins, "The Personal Habits of the Siamese Twins."*

1870 *On the Cunard steamer Palmyra returning from England, Chang suffers a stroke.*

Jan. 17, 1874 *At age 62, Chang dies, and within hours Eng follows.*

D.G. Martin hosts North Carolina Bookwatch, *which airs Sundays at noon and Thursdays at 5 p.m. on UNC-TV.*

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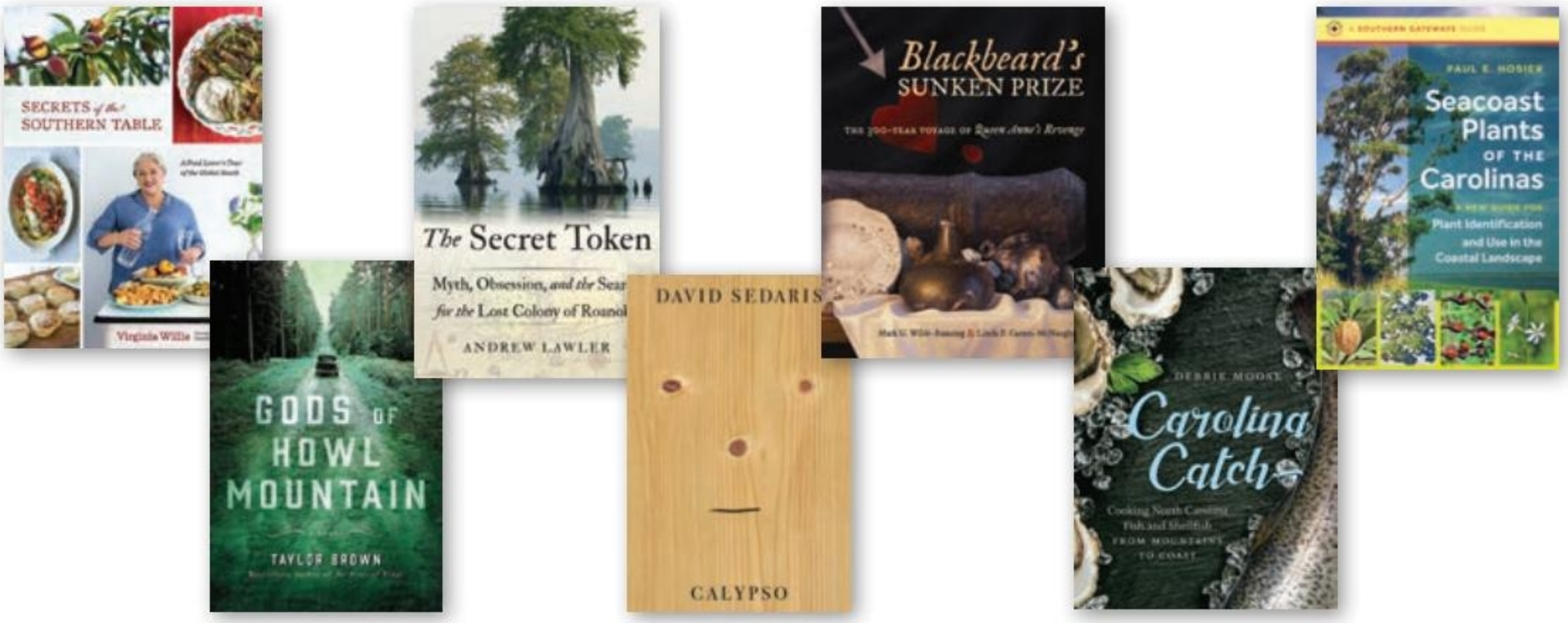
Summer Reads

From Blackbeard to bluefish tacos, a book for every taste



By William Irvine

Crazy Beach, by L.R. Welborn. A boisterous coming-of-age novel about the Boardwalk, working at Britt's Donuts, a trip to Woodstock, and teenage lust in 1970s Carolina Beach by local author L.R. Welborn, whose thinly veiled escapades deliver nostalgia and delight.

Secrets of the Southern Table: A Food Lover's Tour of the Global South, by Virginia Willis. Stories and great Southern recipes — some with surprising global influences — from an award-winning chef and cookbook author.

The Gods of Howl Mountain, by Taylor Brown. Bootleggers, folk healers, and dark secrets in this gritty and evocative novel of a mountain family in 1950s North Carolina.

The Secret Token: Myth, Obsession, and the Search for the Lost Colony of Roanoke, by Andrew Lawler. The author, a distinguished science writer, goes on a rollicking search for clues about the mysteries of the Lost Colony in an intricate tale that blends history, archaeology and myth-busting.

Calypso, by David Sedaris. Further adventures of the humorist, including stories of turtles and tumors, rubbish collecting along the roads of rural England, shopping in Japan, and his family's reunions at their beach house in Emerald Isle.

Blackbeard's Sunken Prize – The 300-Year Voyage of Queen Anne's Revenge, by Mark U. Wilde-Ramsing and Linda F. Carnes-McNaughton. In 1717, the infamous pirate known as Blackbeard captured a French slave vessel and renamed it *Queen Anne's Revenge*, beginning a trail of looting and destruction that stretched from the Caribbean to the Carolinas. Six months later, in order to evade the British authorities in hot pursuit, he ran the ship aground off the coast of North Carolina near present-day Fort Macon State Park, where it sat undisturbed until discovered by divers in 1996. A fascinating account of the ship's history and recovery that sheds new light on 18th-century pirate life.

Carolina Catch: Cooking North Carolina Fish and Shellfish from Mountains to Coast, by Debbie Moose. Blackened Cape shark fillet, Carolina catfish burgers and smoked trout deviled eggs are among the 96 tantalizing dishes in this engaging cookbook, which features an informative Best Basics section on how to select, prepare and store North Carolina seafood.

Seacoast Plants of the Carolinas, by Paul E. Hosier. The long-awaited, updated edition of this 1970s classic, with detailed profiles and color photographs of more than 200 coastal plants as well as a list of natural areas and preserves open to visitors on the North and South Carolina coast.

William Irvine is the senior editor of Salt.

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What's Old is New

Especially at the Wilmington libraries

By Dana Sachs

Harry Tuchmayer

Job: Director, New Hanover County Libraries

First moved to Wilmington: 1981

Favorite spots:

1. With his wife: Le Catalan on the Riverwalk, with a glass of wine
2. With his friends: The Halyburton Park Nature Trail
3. With his grandkids: Hugh MacRae Park

PHOTOGRAPH BY MARK STEELMAN

What do you like to read?
You know, I'm the wrong person to ask. I love seeing what other people read. Our branch managers read such eclectic stuff. I'm your typical person. Give me a Clive Cussler! Or nonfiction. In the last few years, I've been really fascinated by the 1930s: The *Boys in the Boat. Seabiscuit. Unbroken.*

When you said, 'I'm the wrong person to ask,' I thought you were saying you don't read. But you do read.
I'm not a voracious reader like my wife. She'll read dozens of books. I'm a lot more picky than my wife and a lot of our customers.

Why did you become a librarian?
My first job, beyond being a paperboy, was as a reference page in the Beverly Hills Public Library. Two years later, I needed a job to help pay for college, so I went to the library. I went on to work on a Ph.D. in history. I finished all my coursework, (but) never wrote a dissertation. One day (the library administration) asked me if I wanted to go to library school. I guess you go with your strengths!

What do you see as your mission in the library?
Libraries really are central to a community. They are the heart and soul of a city. Not in the old sense that we're just a repository of our history and our culture — though we are — but (a library) responds so well to the changing life cycle. We supply people with the information they need to live. Our challenge is to stay relevant, and I think we have.

How?
Everyone always thinks, 'Well, what are you going to do (at a library)? We've got Google.' Well, you've got Home Depot. You've got Lowe's, but we still need plumbers. I mean, there are some things that maybe you shouldn't touch. It's OK if you are just changing the faucet head, but what if you've got this major plumbing problem? How many of us get halfway through and then think, 'Oh, my goodness. What did I do?' So, (librarians are) skilled at helping people navigate through tons of information. Yeah, if you're planning a trip to Santa Fe, you can get the weather history by Googling, but if you're trying to develop a business plan, or you're looking at something a little more complex, you may want to come here to get assistance in how to filter your search in terms of narrowing down that information.

In what other ways have libraries remained relevant?
The biggest area is that child-parent connection. There is nothing

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What resources might people not know about?

People would be amazed if they saw the depth of knowledge our staff has in the way of technology. I always point to our local history room. We're talking archives, dusty old papers, things like that, but our staff are some of the most innovative people in terms of technology. There's this product called Historypin where you can look up pictures of an old site — say, the corner of 3rd and Chestnut — over a 200-year period. The computer matches all of the same pictures for that location and you can see it change over time. In all of this, there's such an opportunity to blend old and new.

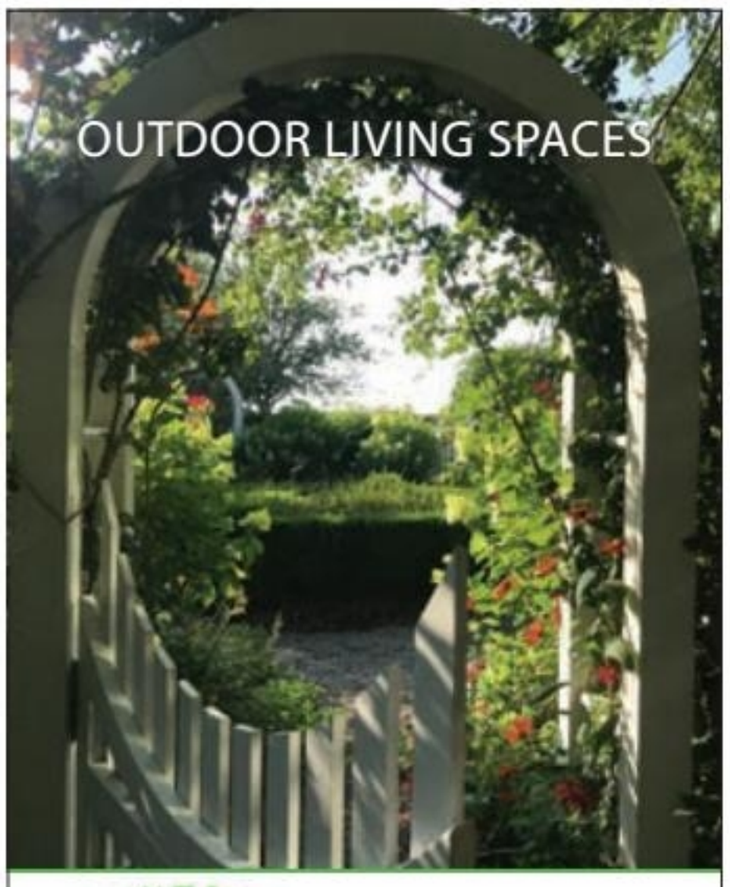
The new Pine Valley Branch will open next year. What can we expect?

It's on the corner of 17th Street and College Road, so it's really the heart of New Hanover County. We've designed this building in a slightly different way. There will be a robust self-check system, so (staff will be) on the floor more and available to help you find what you're looking for. We've got a whole bunch of stuff dedicated to that school-age child, really all the way up through high school. We want to have stuff that brings older kids back into the library, so we've got a maker's space, (which allows) you to create your own things. That could be anything (from) sewing machines to a 3-D printer. We have to work within our means, and part of its budget, but, long-term, we would want all of those things.

What is your view on the debate over the future of the Main Library downtown: Tear it down and redevelop it within a mixed-use project, or preserve it in its current historic building?

It's not the best building. Look, we love history. I would go out of my way to preserve a historic site. This is a square box. A lot of the features of what people remember from the Belk's (Department Store) building

Summer 2018 Favorites



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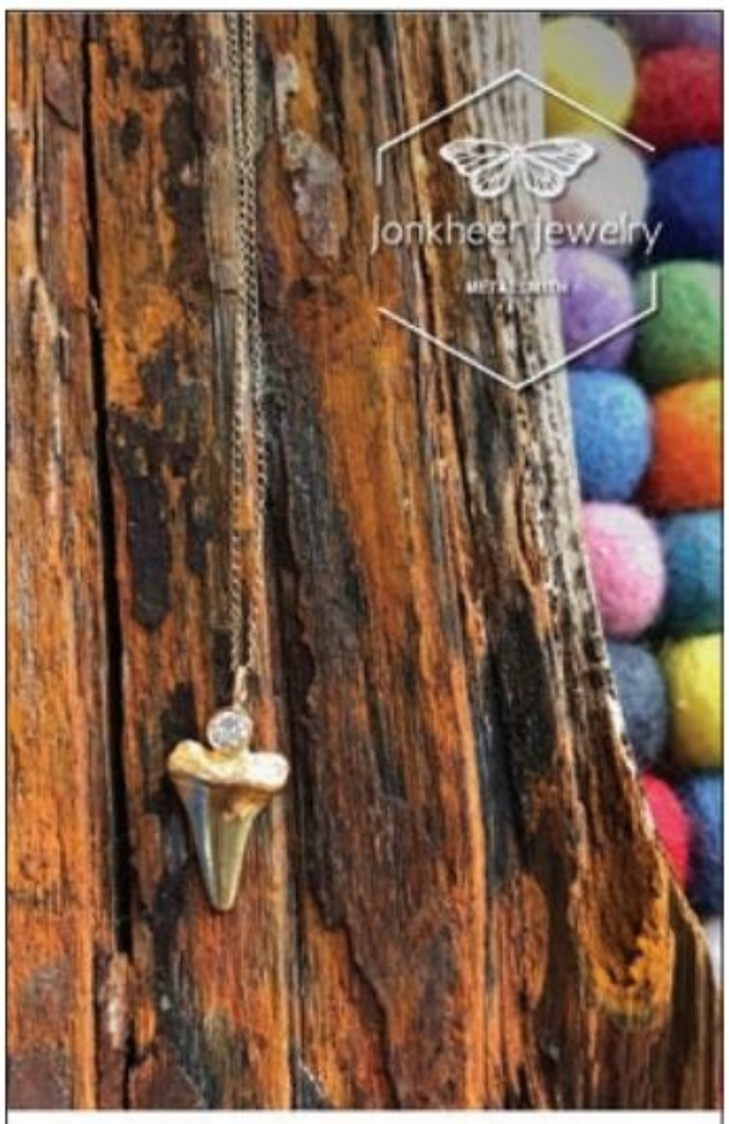

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aren't there any more. The architecture here is nothing unique. It's symbolic of a particular time and place and architectural style, but there's tons of that.

There's tons of that in Wilmington?
Well, there's tons in North Carolina. I'm not an architectural historian and I don't pretend to be. And I'm not saying that there isn't value in the building, but I think that it's a trade-off. Growth and change is a trade-off. And the library could function in an awesome way in a new facility. But it's a community decision and it's fine either way. Either way we'll have a vibrant library downtown.

Let's say that some amazingly generous donor told you, 'I'm going to give the library a million dollars.' What would you do with it?
(*Pause.*)

Should I say 10 million dollars?
OK, 10 million! Wow. There's so much you could develop. There are libraries that have these spaces available for tech Tuesdays, where small businesses collaborate in a workspace. You could have that technology grid. And (I'd like to display) every cookbook that's ever published. A recipe collection. I know you can find these recipes online, but (that's not the same as) looking through a pile of 10 cookbooks. You'd serendipitously see recipes you never even thought of before.

If we had the money, (we could have) a technology petting zoo, where we'd have the latest that people wanted to test out before they buy it. (And) extending the outdoor space for kids when they come to story time. We want to have that, too. All of that's possible. We try to do it every day with the little dollars that we have. It just takes longer.

I love the range here. Some of these ideas sound like complete opposites — the newest technology and then old-fashioned cookbooks.
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Dana Sachs's latest novel, The Secret of the Nightingale Palace, *is available at bookstores, online and throughout Wilmington.*

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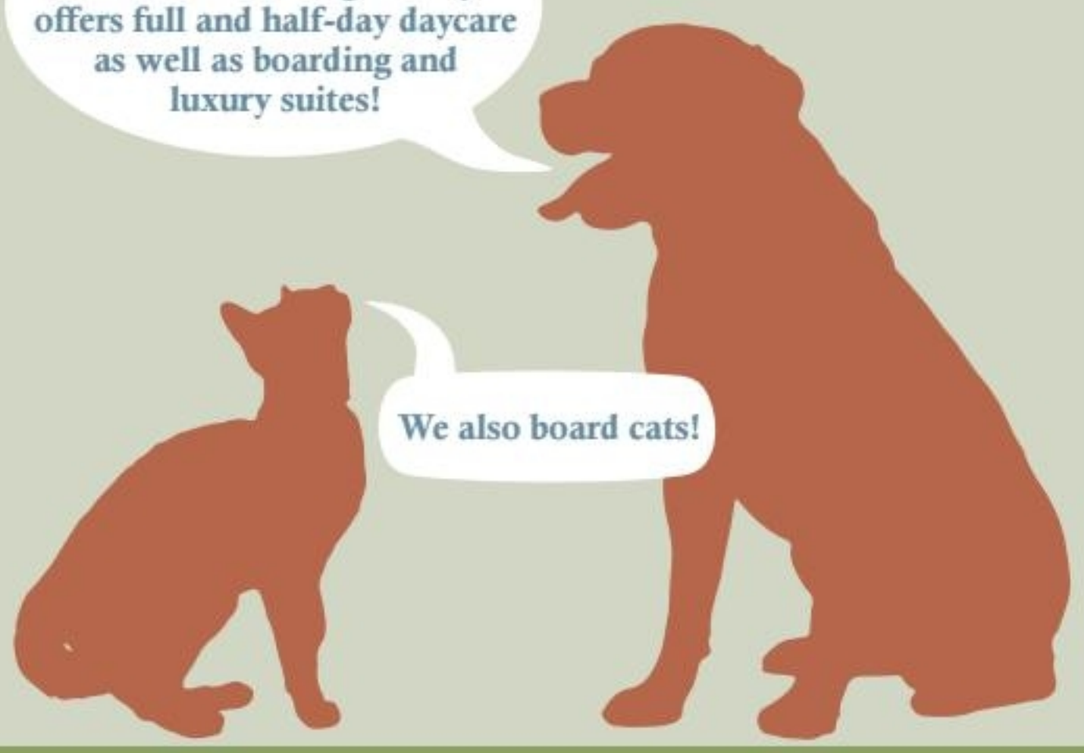
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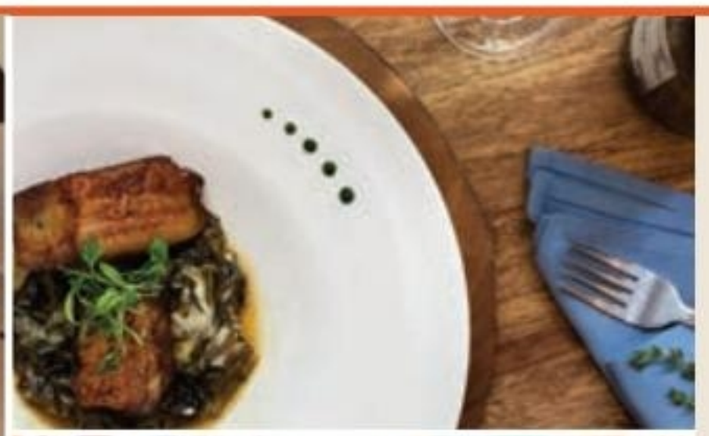

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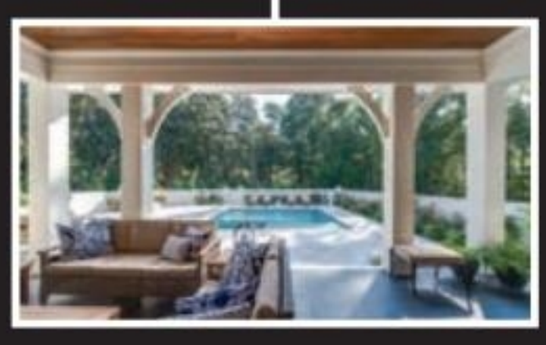

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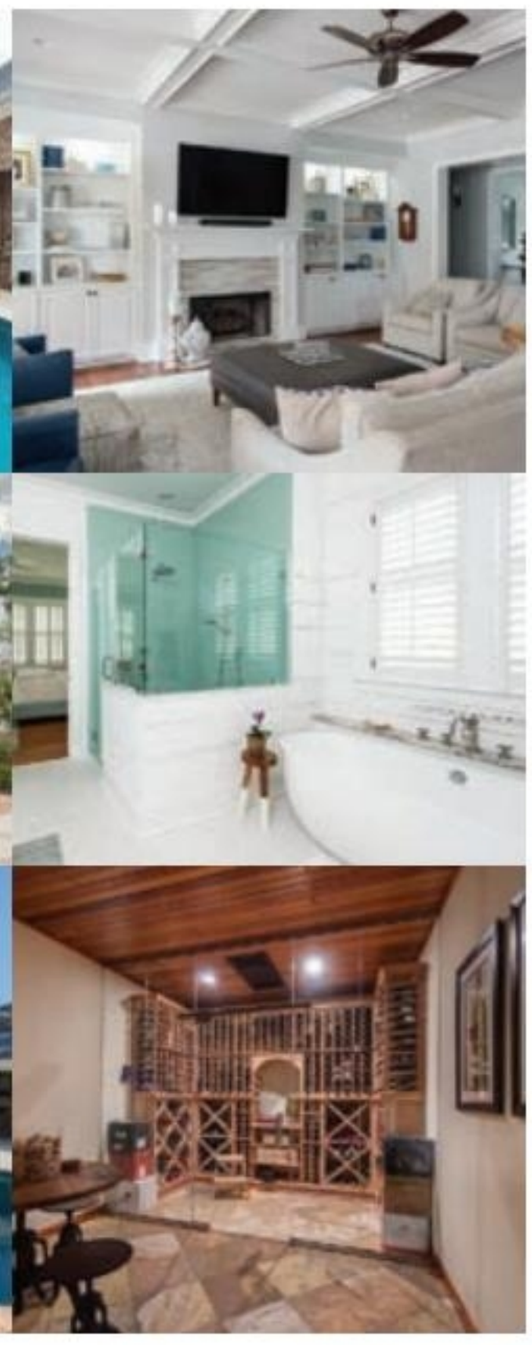

Spa Water with a Kick

A flavored gem from Durham Distillery

PHOTOGRAPH BY TONY CROSS

By Tony Cross

In the past, I've complained about North Carolina ABC stores rolling out the red carpet for copious bottles of flavored vodkas. Though I still find this to be the case, there are exceptions. Full disclosure: I've tried a friend or date's cocktail — you're sharing a sip if we're hanging out together — that tasted quite delicious, only to find out that the base spirit was a flavored vodka. It didn't happen often, but it happened. However, the only time I was completely wowed by a flavored vodka *straight* was the first time I kicked back a sample of Durham Distillery's Cucumber Vodka.

On an early spring day last year, my father accompanied me to a meeting in Durham. "Just please don't say anything," I pleaded. I inherited the gift of gab from him, so I know that when he gets going, it's hard to stop. Pops riding along ended up being a good idea. He's in shape, has a silver handlebar mustache, wears dark shades, black clothing, and looks like a badass. Actually, he *is* a badass; he served 20 years in Special Forces. So, with my dad standing 6 feet behind me while I made my pitch, it looked like I had a bodyguard. Ka-ching. As soon as the meeting was over, we stepped outside, high-fived, and made our way down the street to Durham Distillery.

We were greeted by co-owner Melissa Katrincic. Her husband, Lee, the head distiller and co-owner, joined us. They gave us the grand tour, explaining how their Conniption gin is distilled. The Katrincics are both scientists, and that's how they approach their distilling. My dad doesn't drink gin, but he'll try anything once, and if he likes it, he'll have it again. Melissa is chatting away with Pops, while Lee is answering my questions. Before I know it, samples of their American Dry and Navy Strength gins are being offered, and oblige them we did. The gin seemed to immediately "get good" to Pops, and all I could do was smile and revel in how quickly he can go from 0-to-60 in storytelling mode. In the midst of his explaining one of his past adventures, I noticed Melissa starting to pour a different liquid into a taster glass.

My dad's story stopped dead in its tracks and he asked, "All right! What's next?" Lee and Melissa explained that this was their cucumber vodka. They had used it in the past as a component in some of their gins but had decided they were going to bottle it on its own in North Carolina. One sip, and we were both blown away. On our way back to Southern Pines, the conversation kept circling back around to, "My God, I can't wait until they release that vodka."

Later I reached out to Lee, asking him to explain how he's able to capture the pure essence of the cucumbers in each batch of vodka. Unlike other flavored vodkas, which are basically just a distilled vodka with an extract added, Durham Distillery's tastes like fresh cucumber slices have completely filled up the bottle. It's no wonder Lee and Melissa say it's like "spa water with a kick."

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"The cucumber vodka is the only cucumber vodka on the market distilled under vacuum (no heat applied) with no artificial flavors or added sugar. Most others you see will be extract-based. With ours, only alcohol and fresh sliced cucumbers are used to make it," Lee says. They handpick their cucumbers, which are peeled and sliced, then put in a pot on their vacuum still. "Our corn-base ethanol is added to the pot and the still is sealed. The vacuum still only has a 5-gallon capacity, so it's made in very small batches. A vacuum pump removes all the air from the still. Under the reduced pressure, the ethanol boils around room temperature. So, all that great cucumber flavor is being extracted and subsequently distilled without any heat. The cucumber distillate we get off the vacuum still is around 185-proof, so we add our deionized water to cut it down to 80-proof for bottling." Did you get all of that? In short: hand-picked, small-batch, science, alcohol, delicious.

Last year I wrote an article praising Durham Distillery's Conniption gins, and pleading for them to get a spot on our ABC shelves. In addition to their gins and vodka, they also make excellent chocolate, coffee and mocha liqueurs.

Durham Distillery's gin is also sold in London. *London*. Melissa and Lee were inducted into the United Kingdom Gin Guild. Lee says that the guild is 300 years old, and he and his wife are only the fourth and fifth U.S. distillers ever inducted and the only ones from the South. We're lucky to have such an amazing distillery, producing top-notch spirits. Once you get your hands on their cucumber vodka, try this easy spin on a Moscow Mule I whipped up:

Cuke Mule

2 ounces Durham Distillery Cucumber Vodka
4-5 ounces ginger beer
4 dashes Angostura
Candied ginger and cucumber slices (garnish)

Pour vodka into a rocks glass, add ice and ginger beer. Top with bitters. Garnish with candied ginger and cucumber slices.

Tony Cross is a bartender who runs cocktail catering company Reverie Cocktails *in Southern Pines.*

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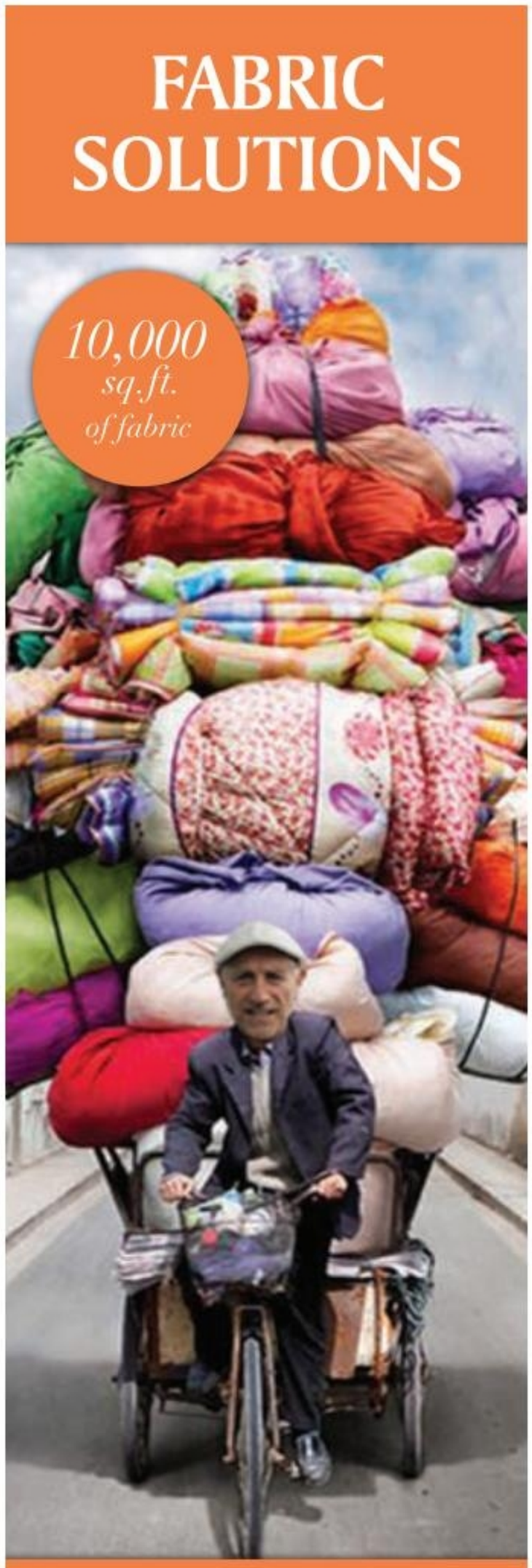
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Where Beauty Blooms

A visit with two of Wilmington's finest gardeners

I must say I've been mopping my allegedly ponderous brow with great frequency so far this sultry summer here in this coastal town named for me. In one day I've sweated more than during my entire 12 years as one of the first speakers of the House of Commons in Britain's young Parliament in the early 1700s.

Mr. Doggett

There I presented myself as a cool, quiet and unruffled (except for my blouses) beacon of noble gentility, which my sweaty and gibbering contemporaries somehow interpreted as dullness. A clod and a fop, these gassy donkeys called me behind my well-tailored back. But they never saw me sweat. Particularly not like this. Great rivulets that would have ruined my favorite white face powder and vermilion rouge, common among elegant aristocrats of my time. (None wore it better than I, Lord Wilmington.)

But now, as my daily outings in this watery wonderland bronzes my flesh for the first time, I welcome the perspicuity that accompanies perspiration. I can now see clearly the beauty of this delicate slice of the coast, and of those salty souls who know and love it. They, too, are getting to know and trust Spencer Compton, Earl of Wilmington and confidante of kings (Georges I and II). Thus is how it has been all my life. Because I am hesitant to speak and have a noble (*ahem*) brow, people tell me things. Their hopes and fears and passions.

Take Aubrey Doggett, for example. He fears a real hurricane this year.

"A once-in-a-hundred-years event, when the water meets the water," he told me as we stood in his uncanny Wrightsville Beach horticultural masterpiece perched on a narrow sandy spit between the Atlantic Ocean and Banks Channel. He well remembers hurricanes like Bertha and Fran that brought those bodies of water clapping together, all but wiping out his nearly maniacal monument to gardening.

He drank himself into handcuffs over the devastation, he told me and a quartet of vacationing ladies listening to this youthful and excitable 64-year-old beach denizen. "I took it personally," he recalled. Perhaps you know Aubrey. You certainly should know his landscaping and just how personally he takes it.

For 32 years he has worked for the Blockade Runner resort, which, to my eye, has the best landscaping and gardening in the area. Yes, I've been to Airlie and the Arboretum. I've now walked and biked nearly every street and alley in town. But in terms of variety, design, expense, tenacity, ingenuity and, yes, sweat, there is nothing like the 4 acres upon which the Blockade Runner sits between those waters.

You may well wonder what a British lord would know about gardening. Let me assure you I am not just a pretty face with a gift for running a divided nation and dozens of its colonies around the world. From my earliest days at our family's moated Compton Wynates estate, I cultivated a passion for all things botanical, both the agricultural and aesthetic. As I grew into power, I encouraged Colonists to not only grow crops, tobacco and hemp for sails, but to strive for beautification and health through gardening. Many flower societies around the world were germinated thusly. Horticulture is required for healthy culture, as I've always said.

Miss Green

I sought out Aubrey Doggett after visiting the resort and finding the unlikely beauty blooming there in the face of salt, sand, blistering sun and northerly winds.

I found a manor-born lad who had to struggle with the winds of the world because of his excitability and short attention span. He's fond of faded plaid shorts, pastel pullover shirts, high woolen socks, laced hiking boots and snappy elastic supports for his creaky but busy knees. His gnarled fingers look like

they could plow rocky soil.

He remembers as a wee moppet, hiding under the family shrubs as they were being pruned, feeling the falling cuttings and the sweat dripping from the landscapers. "I couldn't wait to do that myself," he told me as we walked the property. His story unfolded between colorful descriptions of the plants, their origins, nicknames, properties, difficulties and points of interest, such as historical usages as inks or poisons. I found his knowledge, while delivered in jerks and spurts, like a feast.

He blames and credits a thing he calls attention deficit disorder for his energy and compulsions. His first job at the resort — tending bar — ended, he said, when the benevolent and beauty-loving owners (a local brother and sister) discovered his abundant energy would be better served by pulling weeds than the shirt collars of vacationing inebriates. "It saved my soul," he said of his gardening career at the resort. His annual plant budget is roughly $100,000, he said. Add in his assistants, interns, watering and all the other expenses related to this landscaping challenge, and you're looking at a $1 million or so yearly operation.

This frigid past winter was unusually brutal for the plants. "Everything was tortured," he said. It took forever for the ocean to warm out of the 50s and 60s — it had dipped to the mid-40s! — and then it jumped right up into the 80s as unusually warm weather settled down over the area like a Dutch oven. It's that menacing flip-flop that has him worried about the waters meeting again over his life-affirming garden of Eden.

After soaking up Aubrey's knowledge and passion, I was reminded of another transformative and compulsive gardener whom I've met and grown to admire at N. 4th and Grace Streets. Yes, I know it's on the "other" side of Market Street.

Allison Green knows it, too. For the 27 years she's been renting on that block, she's been trying to make it every bit as pretty, desirable and safe as the gentry side of Market.

When she first moved here from Charleston, West Virginia, in 1991 to sell steel products to Duke Energy, "It was pretty trashy," she told me during one of our pleasant sidewalk visits. There was only one other resident on the block. Grim local characters and rambunctious visitors could make nightlife dodgy at times.

So she began her beautification, picking up trash, sweeping the street and planting the flowers, trees and shrubs that soothed and suited her soul. Dozens of them. Then hundreds. Now thousands. Her plant budget just this year: $10,000.

It's a symphony of beauty — an enchanting variety of textures, colors and smells, spilling out of her apartment building's large yards and filling the long right-of-way between the sidewalk and the street. Look at the ferns on her upper porch! "All my money goes to gardening," she said. "It's just me, my cats and my plants." And it's also the way she does it. As a dedicated follower of fashion and the proud son of the best-dressed woman in England, I must say the aptly named Allison Green immediately struck my fancy with her gardening garb.

I've seen her weeding in a silken slitted kimono. Watering in a short skirt-like thing of her own creation, with ankle-high boots. Every time it's something unusual, glamorous, even daring. "I'm 53 years old," she told me with one of her bright smiles colored with a hint of pale lipstick. "I don't give a shit what anyone thinks of me." My mother, Mary Nicole, would certainly approve of gardening in heels. "If it's worth doing," she liked to say, "it's worth getting dressed up for."

And many are those who approve of Allison Green and her dedication. Neighborhood walkers like me stop to soak it in and offer thanks. Local drivers slow or stop to see what's blooming. "I notice something new almost every day," said young neighbor Thomas Esenbock. "I'll never move because of Allison."

It's partly why she does it. "I like to think I've set the tone for the block," she told me.

But she also does it for the reasons Aubrey does: It's in her blood and bones, it keeps her fit and young and grounded, and it is all so very tangible, this difference working with the Earth can make in our fair city.

Your Lord Wilmington will proudly mop his brow to that. — *Spencer Compton*

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Pectoral Sandpiper

Birds of eternal summer

By Susan Campbell

The group of birds that more often than not makes most birdwatchers cringe is sandpipers. Small, often fast-moving birds with longish legs and streaky, drab plumage, they're definitely tricky to differentiate, especially without a good bit of patience. But once you begin to appreciate the subtle differences in appearance and behavior as well as their habitat preferences, teasing them apart gets a bit easier. Add to that an understanding of the timing of their appearance along our coast and you just might be able to identify a hefty percentage of these fascinating feathered creatures.

One in particular that makes an appearance both spring and fall in North Carolina is the pectoral sandpiper. Much of this bird's feathering is made up of many shades of brown: striped, scalloped and streaked, depending on how you are looking at it. The belly, however, is pure white, and the legs a dull yellow.

A close look at these handsome birds reveals a finely streaked head, neck and chest with heavier dark markings below. The back and wing feathers have black centers with brown margins. The brown varies from a tan color to deep chestnut. Immature birds have more of the chestnut edging than do their parents. Even the bill, which is relatively long, is tan at the base and becomes almost black toward the tip. But that clear demarcation between the dark lines on the breast with the white ventral area is characteristic of this species and easy to spot, even at some distance.

These birds get their name from the peculiar vocalizing of the adult males during courtship. They actually produce a bellowing from a sac in their throat as they fly over potential mates in the open, wet grassy tundra of northwestern Canada and Alaska. The hooting sound that is produced during this display is distinctive and most unusual for such a small bird. The male will proceed to follow a prospective mate on foot, vigorously bobbing his head, extending his wings skyward at the grand finale.

Not only do pectoral sandpipers seek out grassy areas for nesting, but they also do a good bit of foraging in this kind of habitat as well. They can be considered "grasspipers" more so than sandpipers. These birds eat an inordinate number of insects during the year; however, they also take crustaceans and other invertebrates found in the moist margins of wetlands of all kinds. These birds are visual predators but will readily probe mud and sand for food items.

Pectorals are birds of eternal summer, leaving their breeding grounds in the high Arctic in July to head for a wintering destination south of the Equator. They gradually will be making their way through the eastern and central United States as they travel down into South America. These little birds use powered flight, often flying hundreds of miles at a stretch on their journey. Much of that distance is covered at night, when the air is cooler, and stars guide them along the way. Also the bird hawks, fierce visual predators, are roosting, so are not much of a threat as they wing their way overhead, hurrying southward. But when they stop to rest and refuel, these birds can be found singly or in small groups during the day. Should you happen upon a flock of sandpipers in the weeks ahead, hopefully you will be close enough to pick out at least one pectoral in the mix — before fall migration has passed.

Susan would love to receive your wildlife sightings and photos at susan@ncaves.com.

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shining like copper pots. And scattered around
their feet, creeping buttercups, yellow as freshly

grated lemon zest — each petal clustered around
the center, creating a corolla of color so dazzling,

they rival the sun's golden light. And it is quiet
here, the way a room is quiet but not silent, with

the sporadic whinnies and wickers of contented
horses, the buzzing of bees, the croaking of frogs

in a nearby creek — a low hum of pleasing sounds.
But it is mostly about the light, this idyllic scene,

how bright it shines on a horse's satiny skin, how
all the flowers cup their yellow palms to catch it.

– *Terri Kirby Erickson*

The Real Song of the South

How an eccentric Alabama spinster collected folktales and living voices – human and animal alike – from an age that is gone with the wind

By Nan Graham

We scrambled flat on our stomachs, wrestling the bulky cardboard box from under the looming four-poster bed. My cousin Anne and I are not teenagers . . . we're not even middle-aged . . . so it was a grim spectacle of struggling grayheads, who risked never getting vertical again, to do this.

The musty papers and letters of one of the most colorful of our relatives, our great-aunt, Martha Strudwick Young, a diminutive professional writer, born the year after the War Between the States began, contained some surprising new information. Cousin Anne had never looked in the boxes since her mother's death in 1970, some 40-plus years ago. We were only a few miles from Martha Young's birthplace in Hale County, Alabama, at a place called The Pillbox a few miles out from Greensboro, Alabama, and my visit had prompted questions about the writer's childhood. We were well into the second round of iced tea when Anne remembered the flat coat box stored beneath the bed.

We knew from family stories that Martha's early years were spent riding in the carriage with her father, Dr. Elisha Young, through the Hale County countryside as he made his rounds and tended to his patients. A surgeon in the Confederate Army stationed at Fort Morgan in Mobile – and imprisoned in New Orleans after the fall of Mobile – Dr. Young returned to his little family after the war to practice medicine in Greensboro, Alabama. A born storyteller, the doctor entertained the little girl with stories of making quilts with his black nurse as a young boy, eyewitness accounts of battles on Mobile Bay, and starving troops in the Alabama countryside as the father and daughter roamed the county in his buggy on house calls. He told of performing the first ever successful cutting and suturing of a carotid artery on a man stabbed and brought to his kitchen table in the middle of the night. The patient survived the procedure in the makeshift operating room. Dr. Young said that early quilt-making, common among young Southern boys in the 1860s in the county, gave him his surgical skills.

Miss Martha Young

Martha had a quick ear for the rich dialect of the black folks at home and in the rural countryside. She was spellbound with their musical language and loved their tales of witches, wicked spells and ha'nts, and stories of talking birds. She absorbed the speech, its cadence and energy, of the black storytellers. Martha took mental notes on the actual calls and songs of birds of her native Hale County along the wooded roads. She was a good listener and had an excellent ear for mimicry.

She began to write and craft the oral tales told to her by blacks in her household and those she knew in the small community of Greensboro. She listened to the musical calls from the men and women who peddled fresh butterbeans and field peas ("*Fe-ull Peeas. Yas. Freee-sh Pleeeez . . .*") from carts on the dusty streets of her neighborhood. She listened to the ghost stories of the cook Chloe in the family kitchen house and to the animal stories of Isham, who helped with the horses and cows. She wove the tales into lyrical and haunt-

ing stories about sparrows' chatty conversations with crows and baby robins squabbling among themselves. And useful warnings that picking peaches from the tree after sundown would kill the tree. Martha added her own keen observations of nature in Greensboro and the countryside around it, and incorporated the sounds of the birds and creatures as an integral part of her stories.

Being the oldest child of the eight siblings (of whom only five survived), Martha as a young adult in her 20s inherited the role of caretaker of the family at her mother's early death in 1887. Her physician father could never have managed without his eldest daughter's capable and no-nonsense discipline of her younger, motherless brothers and sisters. Martha practiced her bird calls and storytelling skills on the younger children, who were enthralled at their big sister's tales of the talking buzzards, singing bats and swamp witches. Amazingly, she continued her writing despite being mistress of a large household and surrogate mother to a brood of children ages 7 into pre-teen.

And after raising her younger brothers and sisters, Martha, or Tut (rhymes with foot), as the family called her, decided that the single life was the life for her. As she always replied to inquiries about her marital state: "No, I am not married. I shall stay . . . forever Young!" (Her early sibling-rearing may explain the decision of the many spinsters out there, especially around the turn of the century.) Granddaughter of an Alabama anti-Secessionist, she had a college degree and was encouraged in her writing by her family. She started her career under the pseudonym Eli Shepperd, since young women from the South were not usually accepted in the male-dominated literary scene.

She began submitting her dialect bird stories to the *New Orleans Times-Democrat*, which first published her work in 1884, a Christmas story titled "A Nurse's Tale." Other Southern newspapers published the prolific writer's stories.

The creator of *Brer Rabbit and the Tar Baby*, Joel Chandler Harris, gave high praise to the dialect writer, according to one newspaper account and even collaborated with Martha on one of his Uncle Remus collections. Joel Chandler Harris himself wrote: "Her dialect verse . . . is the best written since Irwin Russell died. Some of it is incomparably the best ever written."

Her first book, with the catchy title *Plantation Songs for My Lady's Banjo and Other Negro Lyrics and Monologues*, was published in 1901, still under the pseudonym Eli Shepperd. The originator of Brer Rabbit contacted the writer under that name. Joel Chandler Harris invited "Mr. Shepperd" to join him at a small hunting lodge at his Georgia home, Eagle's Nest, to work on a collection of folk stories. It was a secluded spot and Harris felt it would be a productive collaboration. Naturally, Martha revealed her identity as a lady and responded that she hardly thought that Mrs. Harris would approve the plan. The two writers did eventually collaborate, but not in the secluded setting first suggested to Eli Shepperd!

More books followed *Plantation Songs: Plantation Bird Legends* (1902), *Bessie Bell* (1903) (later re-released as *Somebody's Little Girl* in 1910), *When We Were Wee* (1912), *Behind the Dark Pines* (1912), *Two Little Southern Sisters* (1919), and *Minute Dramas: Kodak in the Quarters* (1921). Another Martha Young book, *Fifty Folklore Fables*, was reviewed and mentioned in publicity releases but is unable to be located. *Plantation Bird Legends* and *Behind the Dark Pines* are both illustrated with pen-and-ink drawings by J.M. Conde, the artist used by Joel Chandler Harris. Besides her eight published books, numerous articles and stories by Martha appeared in such magazines as *Woman's Home Companion*, *Cosmopolitan* and *Christian Advocate*. *Cosmopolitan*, begun in 1886, was a family magazine at the time (a far cry — not even in shouting distance — from the modern *Cosmopolitan*) and featured such established writers as Jack London, Edith Wharton, Willa Cather, Theodore Dreiser and later H.G. Wells and George Bernard Shaw. (In 1965, Helen Gurley Brown, author of *Sex and the Single Girl*, revamped the family magazine of Martha's day,

RECITAL

MISS MARTHA YOUNG

WILL READ FROM HER WORKS "PLANTATION SONGS," "PLANTATION BIRD LEGENDS," "FIFTY FOLK LORE FABLES," ETC.

MUSICAL NUMBERS BY PROMINENT ARTISTS

MUSICAL NUMBERS BY PROMINENT ARTISTS

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 15th, 1906, 3 P. M.

ASTOR GALLERY

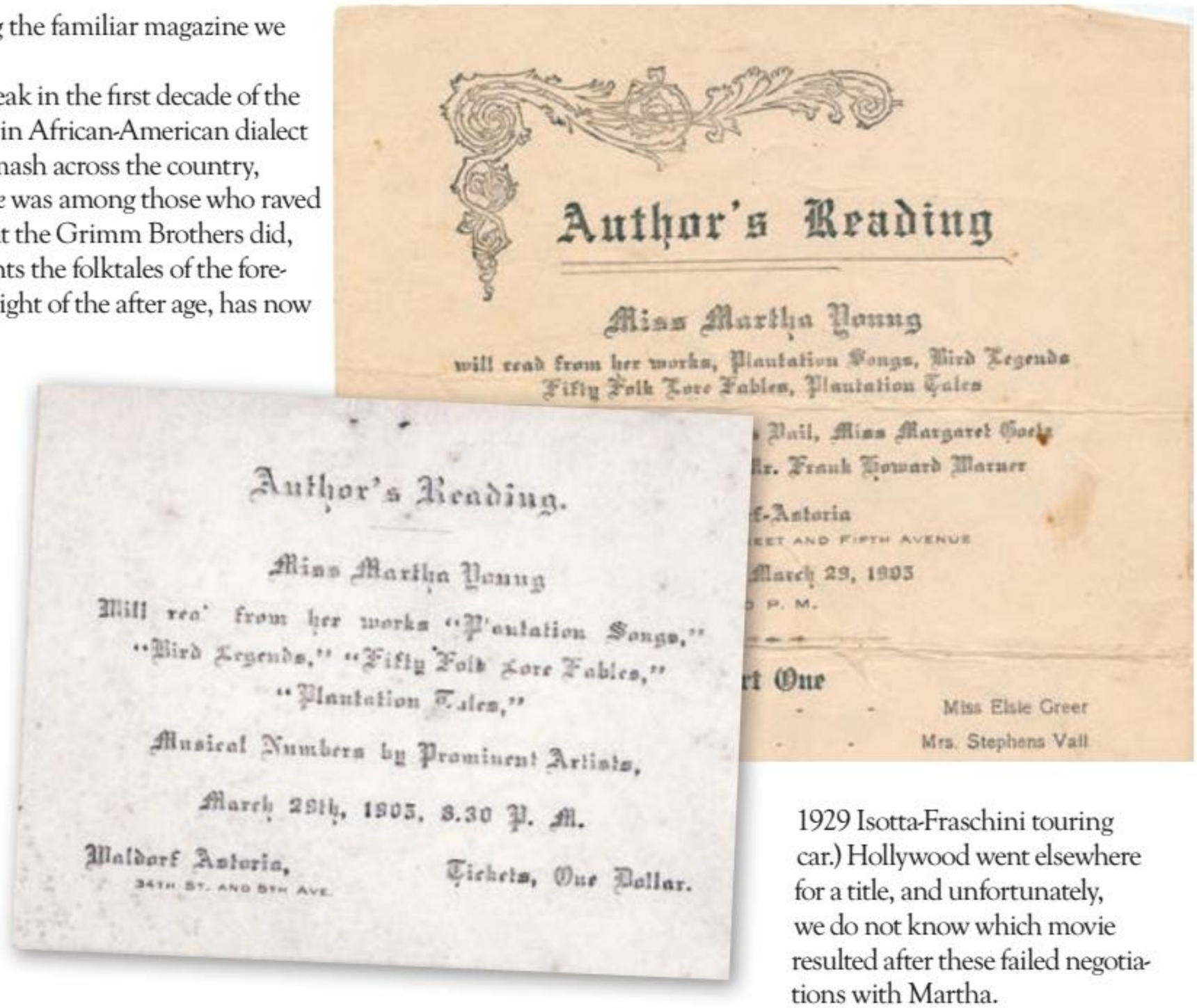
WALDORF ASTORIA, 34th STREET AND FIFTH AVENUE

TICKETS FOR SALE HERE

zeroing in on women's issues, becoming the familiar magazine we know today as the sexy *Cosmopolitan*.)

Martha Young reached her literary peak in the first decade of the 20th century. Her whimsical bird stories in African-American dialect were a runaway hit. Her books were a smash across the country, North and South. The *Pittsburgh Gazette* was among those who raved about her *Plantation Bird Legends:* "What the Grimm Brothers did, taking from the lips of unlettered peasants the folktales of the fore-times and setting them down for the delight of the after age, has now been done by Miss Young." Martha's other animal tales included such titles as "Why Brer Possum's Tail Is Bare," "Mr. Bluebird's Debt," and "Why Mr. Frog Is Still a Batchelor."

Martha even performed live at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in 1906, reading stories and poetry in dialect from her published books and actually performing bird calls and trills to the audience's amazement and delight. Other "musical numbers by prominent artists," not mentioned by name, were also to appear on the evening program. She became a popular speaker in the East and almost all reviews of her events laud her delivery and lively presentations with comments about her distinctive voice.


Author's Reading
Miss Martha Young
will read from her works, Plantation Songs, Bird Legends
Fifty Folk Lore Fables, Plantation Tales
Author's Reading.
Miss Martha Young
Will read from her works "Plantation Songs," "Bird Legends," "Fifty Folk Lore Fables," "Plantation Tales,"
Musical Numbers by Prominent Artists,
March 29th, 1905, 8.30 P. M.
Waldorf Astoria, 34TH ST. AND 5TH AVE.
Tickets, One Dollar.
March 29, 1905
Miss Elsie Greer
Mrs. Stephens Vail

OK. It WAS a different era, but I like to think Martha was an early Susan Boyle — without the bad hair — an unlikely candidate for public success having been raised in the tiny town of Greensboro, Alabama**.** Tickets for the performance were $1, the equivalent of about $27 in today's currency, when the 1906 worker's wage was about $300 per year and the average hourly wage 22 cents an hour.

Her Waldorf-Astoria poster shows the studio photograph of the petite 28-year-old Martha in an elegant pose. Reality was that in 1906, Miss Young was well into her 42nd year and a bit more stout (as they say in the South) than the slender young woman pictured.

Tut even had an offer to perform in vaudeville in New York, but politely demurred. (I am certain her lips were pursed when she did.)

She was quite prolific: plays, novels, stories for education journals and poetry, some even feminist. The poem "Uncle Isham" written under her pen name is narrated by an African-American to suffragettes who laughingly says ladies, don't bother. He complains that he got the vote, but it didn't change a thing . . . so never mind!

Hollywood called early on. One of her books, *Somebody's Little Girl*, caught a Hollywood mogul's eye. His office called the author Martha Young. As it turned out, it was not her story they were interested in, it was the title. Could they purchase the title alone, they asked. Martha was mortified at the idea. "Of course not," she replied. "I would just as well sever my child's head from its body as sell my title from its story." (It does make you think of Gloria Swanson's has-been character in *Sunset Boulevard* when she thinks Cecil B. DeMille wants her for a movie comeback, when he actually only wants to borrow her vintage 1929 Isotta-Fraschini touring car.) Hollywood went elsewhere for a title, and unfortunately, we do not know which movie resulted after these failed negotiations with Martha.

One family story centered around Martha's ferocious love of coffee and her prodigious consumption of the drink. She downed a dozen or more cups a day, but one Lent she decided to deny herself her most precious beverage. She announced what she was giving up for Lent with an unseemly pride to family, friends and neighbors: No coffee for 40 days and 40 nights.

About a week into her extreme Lenten abstinence, her brother came to see her. The door was open; he called . . . no answer. He wandered through the empty house until he heard a tiny voice from the closet. "In here, Elisha."

He opened the door and saw his sister sitting on a straight chair in the darkened closet, drinking a cup of coffee.

"Tut," he chastised, "Don't you know the Lord can see you, even in this closet?"

"Of course I do," she said, taking another sip. "But the neighbors can't."

Her Presbyterian brother closed the closet door and left her to her secret sin.

Tut became the family eccentric, a standout in a host of relatives competing for the title. Martha Young never voted in any election, even after women won the right to vote. She had been born the year Alabama seceded from the Union. Alabama came back after Appomattox . . . Martha never did. She was of the notion that she was not a citizen of the United States and accordingly, was not an eligible voter.

Her tiny feet were a particular source of pride. And with reason. In Martha's day, Birmingham was where you shopped when you wanted

something grand. It was Alabama's answer to Paris. Passing the city's finest shoe store, Tut stopped to read the display sign:

TRY ON CINDERELLA'S SLIPPER
You Might Be the Lucky Winner of a
Pair of Shoes of Your Choice!

Tut strolled into the shop and sat while the salesman slipped the crystal slipper on her foot with ease. A perfect fit! She selecting the most cunning — and expensive — shoes on display. With shopping bag in hand, she waltzed out to meet her family for the triumphal return to Greensboro. Needless to say, she and her feet were the envy of every female in town. In all her photographs from that day forward, she managed to display her Cinderella foot peeking out from her floor-length dress.

Also vain about her small hands, she always posed them prominently in every picture. At one dinner party, she took a stroll in the garden at her host's home at dusk. When she reached to touch a flower, she was bitten by a small garden snake. She rushed to the house, where she dropped to the sofa, crying, "My hand! My beautiful little hand. *Ohhhh!*" She held her hand aloft for inspection. As the guests gathered round, Martha put on a performance her fellow guests never forgot. Sarah Bernhardt would have been proud. Talk about how to sabotage a party. Tut's uber-vanity quickly became part of the family history.

Local lore in Greensboro claims that Margaret Mitchell came calling on Tut in the 1930s. She was looking for advice on African-American speech patterns and dialect on a certain book she was writing. There is no evidence of this research visit by the author of *Gone with the Wind* except three local Greensboro sources who have heard the story handed down.

In 2006, a call came from Hollywood asking if I had or knew of any recordings of Martha Young's voice. Production was beginning on a new film about Zelda Fitzgerald. They had heard of Martha Young's work and were anxious to hear her Deep South accent for resource material for the film. Alas, although there is mention of her recordings in several writings about her, none could be tracked down.

The aging author did not mellow with age. One of my favorite stories about Tut was about her later years, when she developed diabetes in her old age and would not go to the doctor for follow-up visits.

"But Martha," her friends insisted, "You need to get your blood checked."

"I certainly do not," she replied, drawing herself up imperiously. "I can assure you, I have the very best blood in Alabama."

As the century rolled on and literary styles changed, Martha turned from writing lively animal stories to religious poetry and full-length plays as her next endeavors. It was an unfortunate career move. Martha's religious poems are excruciatingly bad, but despite that fact, they continued to appear in magazines and newspapers. A few of these poetic gems' titles: "Buddha's Lilies" (Tut was an avid Episcopalian) and "Sermon on the Mule," "Blessings of the Magnolia," and "Sermon Against Bad Language." The tedious plays (my personal favorite was *Dice of Death*) and her novels were never published, thank God, and now languish in a library's special collection archives.

In the late 1930s, Walt Disney contacted Martha's agent, according to correspondence found under that bed. The Disney studio was interested in animating her bird characters and stories. The elderly author had almost stopped all writing by now, but her agent's letters were wildly optimistic. Disney, flush with the huge success of the 1937 release of *Snow White*, was working with Martha's bird stories and had come up with some ideas on using them in a Disney full-length animated feature film.

"Oh no," wrote Martha after reading one Disney adaptation, "Sis Sparrow would never say such a thing! No, no, Brer Crow could not possible perform such a dance . . . it's all wrong. Wrong!" The imperi-

ous author was unyielding to the siren song of Hollywood.

Negotiations broke down after several years, the letters reveal. The headstrong Miss Martha Young proved a tough cookie. Five years later, Disney came out with *Song of the South*, the mix of animation and real film characters. Aunt Tut died in 1941 and the correspondence recording the futile negotiation with Walt Disney was stashed under that poster bed in Hale County, where it remained until a few summers ago.

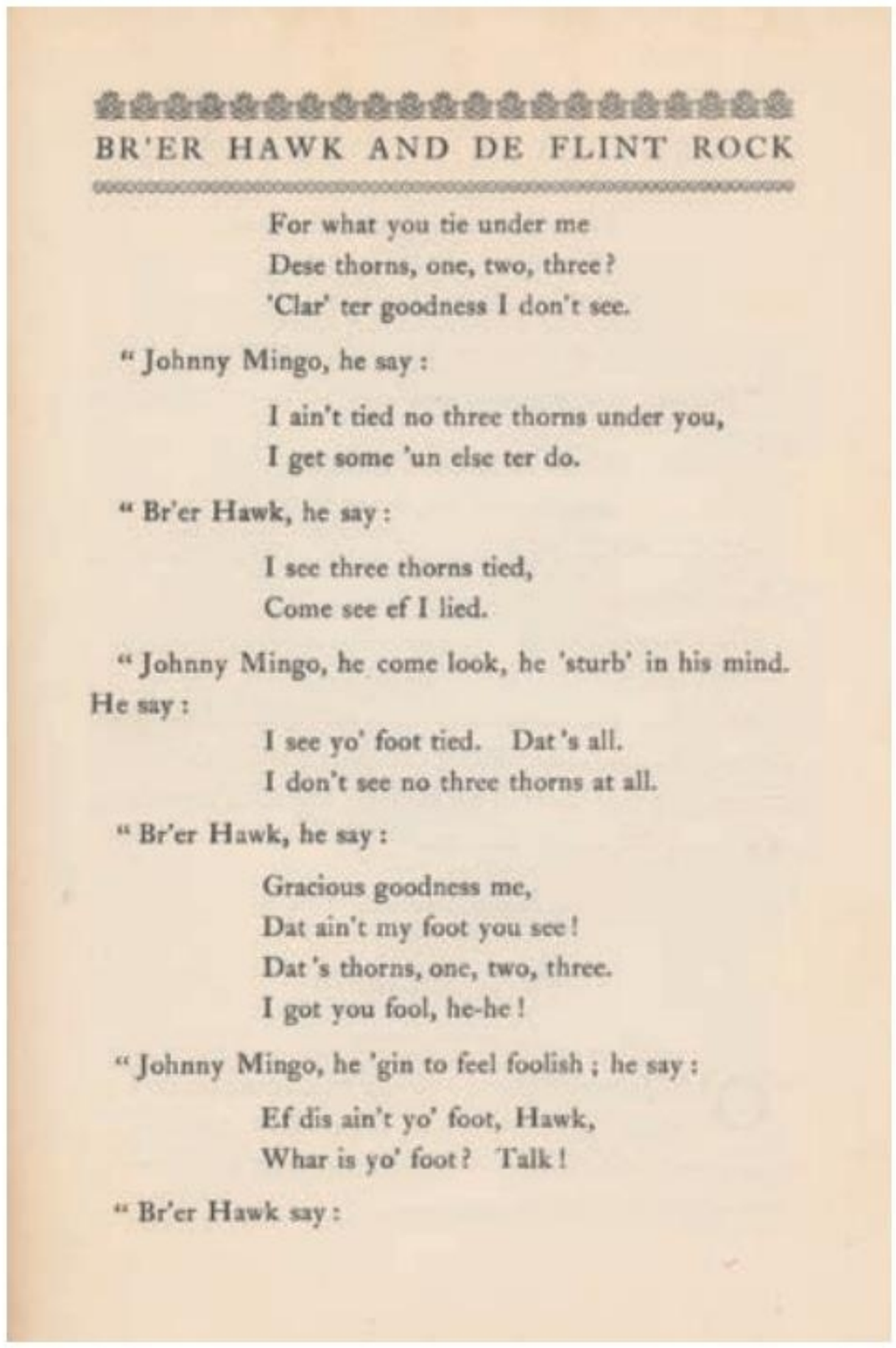
Sis Sparrow could have been singing "Zip-a-Dee-Doo-Dah" while Bruh Crow and Martha Young's other bird characters danced, if only Proud Martha had not been so mule-headed. She coulda been a contenda . . . maybe!

Acknowledgment for the culture and dialect of the black stories is a growing movement in the literary world. Zora Neale Hurston's *Barracoon*, the true story of a survivor of the trans-Atlantic slave trade, was refused by editors in 1927 because of its dialect narrative and is now published with a scholarly introduction.

Aunt Tut is not completely forgotten. Almost all her early works have been republished by academics and folklore enthusiasts with original titles and author Martha Young's name. And so the original stories remain in print.

Virginia Hamilton, a noted African-American author, read some of Martha Young's folktales, rewrote them (it is almost a translation from the dialect) and had famed Barry Moser illustrate the stories. *When Birds Could Talk and Bats Could Sing*, published in 1996, is a beautifully illustrated book of Martha Young's stories that are a joy to read today. (My only complaint: The book is titled by Virginia Hamilton. As an academician, Hamilton surely knew that the correct way to title the book would be: By Martha Young as retold by Virginia Hamilton.) There is a brief explanation of Martha Young on the last page of Hamilton's book. The beautiful new version of Martha Strudwick Young's fanciful tales of talking sparrows and dancing crows is thankfully preserved.

Nan Graham is a regular Salt *contributor and has been a local NPR commentator since 1995.*



BR'ER HAWK AND DE FLINT ROCK

For what you tie under me
Dese thorns, one, two, three?
'Clar' ter goodness I don't see.

" Johnny Mingo, he say :

I ain't tied no three thorns under you,
I get some 'un else ter do.

" Br'er Hawk, he say :

I see three thorns tied,
Come see ef I lied.

" Johnny Mingo, he come look, he 'sturb' in his mind. He say :

I see yo' foot tied. Dat 's all.
I don't see no three thorns at all.

" Br'er Hawk, he say :

Gracious goodness me,
Dat ain't my foot you see!
Dat 's thorns, one, two, three.
I got you fool, he-he!

" Johnny Mingo, he 'gin to feel foolish ; he say :

Ef dis ain't yo' foot, Hawk,
Whar is yo' foot? Talk!

" Br'er Hawk say :

"'You'r I
Can tetch de sky?"

"He pass de howdys wid Brer Dog."

"Fiel' Lark, he say : 'Ef you do dat you 'll git *too* fat, and Mister Man 'll kill you right now!'"

A Passion For

By William Irvine · Illustrations by Steven Guarnaccia

It all started when I discovered the mysterious connection between TUMS and SMUT. This childhood revelation (and the fact that I can read backward, a talent which I inherited from my mother) has led to a lifelong interest in collecting and inventing palindromes, words and phrases that read the same way forward and backward

The cult of the palindromes owes its existence to Sotades of Maroneia, a Greek poet and satirist of the third century B.C., who invented palindromic verse and coined the term. The last century has produced J.A. Lindon and Leigh Mercer, British palindromists of rare accomplishment, as well as part-time palindromist and full-time humorist James Thurber. (One of his best: HE GODDAM MAD DOG, EH?)

The secret to constructing a fine palindrome is to start with a promising middle word with well-spaced vowels and consonants (FALAFEL or ASPARAGUS or ARUGULA spring to mind) and build outward, rather than starting with an end word (a mistake common to beginners). Punctuation is suspended; the only poetic license. Only a small number of palindromes make any sense without a frame of reference. So, unless you know you are reading a note from a New Guinean decorator, R.E. PAPUA ETAGERE GATEAU PAPER doesn't mean much. Or AMARYLLIS SILLYRAMA (a comedy club for flowers?) Or how about SATAN, OSCILLATE MY METALLIC SONATAS?

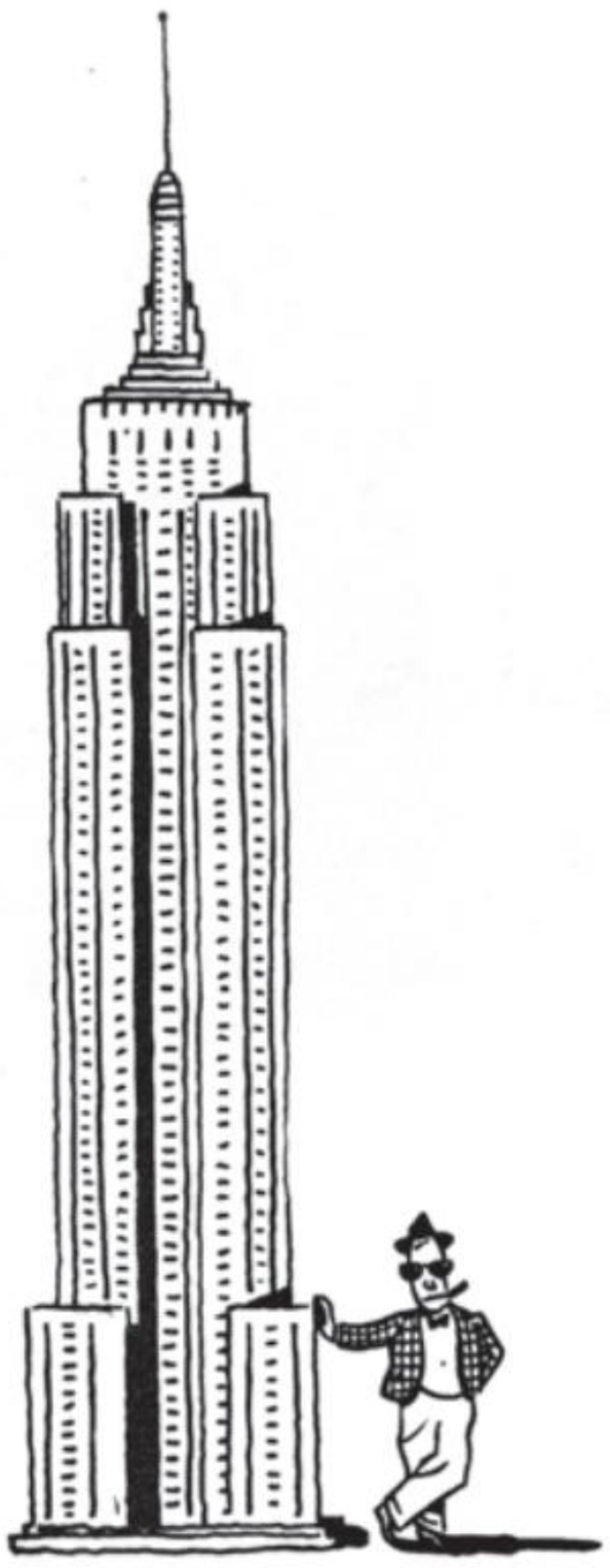
For some reason, there are many good palindromes that incorporate the names of Republicans and dictators: DRAT SADAM, A MAD DASTARD; WONDER IF SUNUNU'S FIRED NOW; NORIEGA CAN IDLE, HELD IN A CAGE IRON. And consider this fine Sarah Palin-drome: WASILLA'S ALL I SAW.

Some of the best palindromes are remarkable in their brevity and simplicity: EVIL OLIVE, for example. Or the exquisite GOLDENROD-ADORNED LOG. But these pale in sophistication when compared with one of my all-time favorites, composed by the British author Alastair Reid:

T. ELIOT, TOP BARD, NOTES PUTRID TANG EMANATING, IS SAD. "I'D ASSIGN IT A NAME: GNAT-DIRT UPSET ON DRAB POT TOILET."

The artist Steven Guarnaccia and I have been palindrome pals for a very long time. (In fact, so far back that when we began collaborating, the internet was something in a galaxy far, far away.) So in response to those youngsters who say, "Can't you just look all these up on the Internet?" I gently reply that many of my earliest efforts were actually the result of countless hours with pad and paper, thumbing through dictionaries and collecting word lists of likely candidates. It sounds quaint, now, doesn't it?

The following drawings are from our latest collaboration, *DO GEESE SEE GOD: A Palindrome Anthology* (available on Amazon). I hope you enjoy these plums of our palindromic plundering!



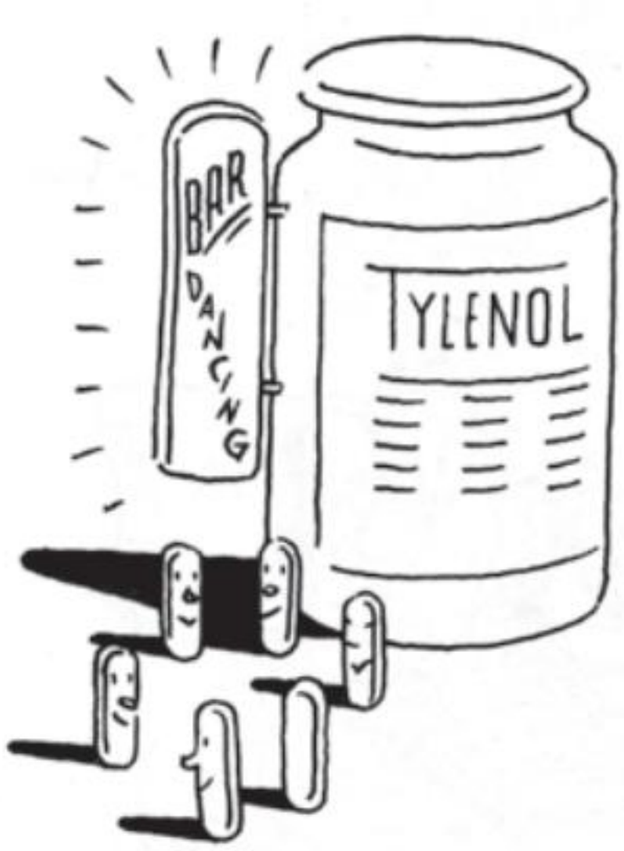
MUST SELL AT TALLEST SUM

When he is not indulging in logology, William Irvine is the senior editor of Salt.

Palindromes

STELLA WON NO WALLETS

GODS RIDICULE LUCID I.R.S. DOG



LONELY TYLENOL

YAWN A MORE ROMAN WAY

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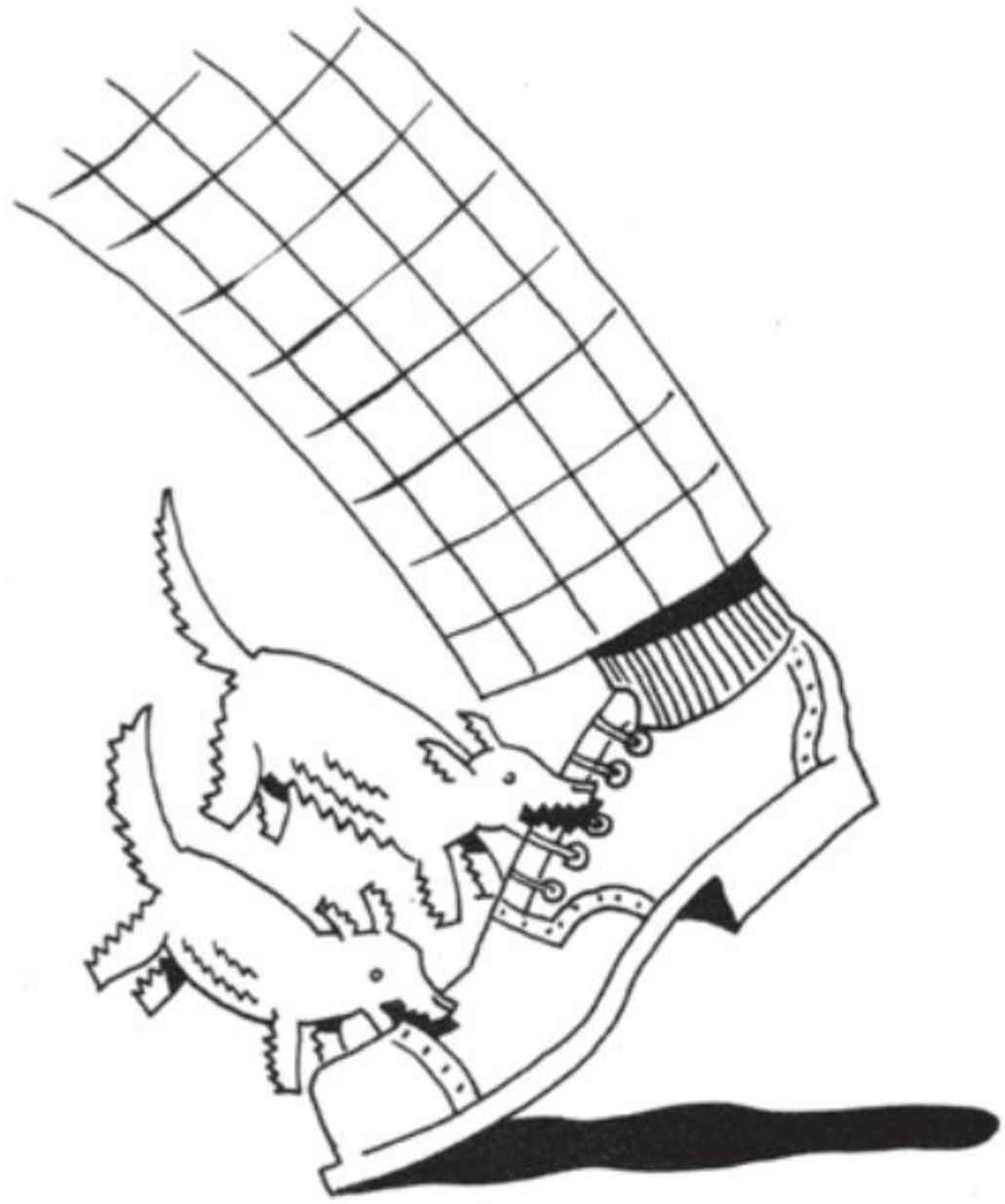
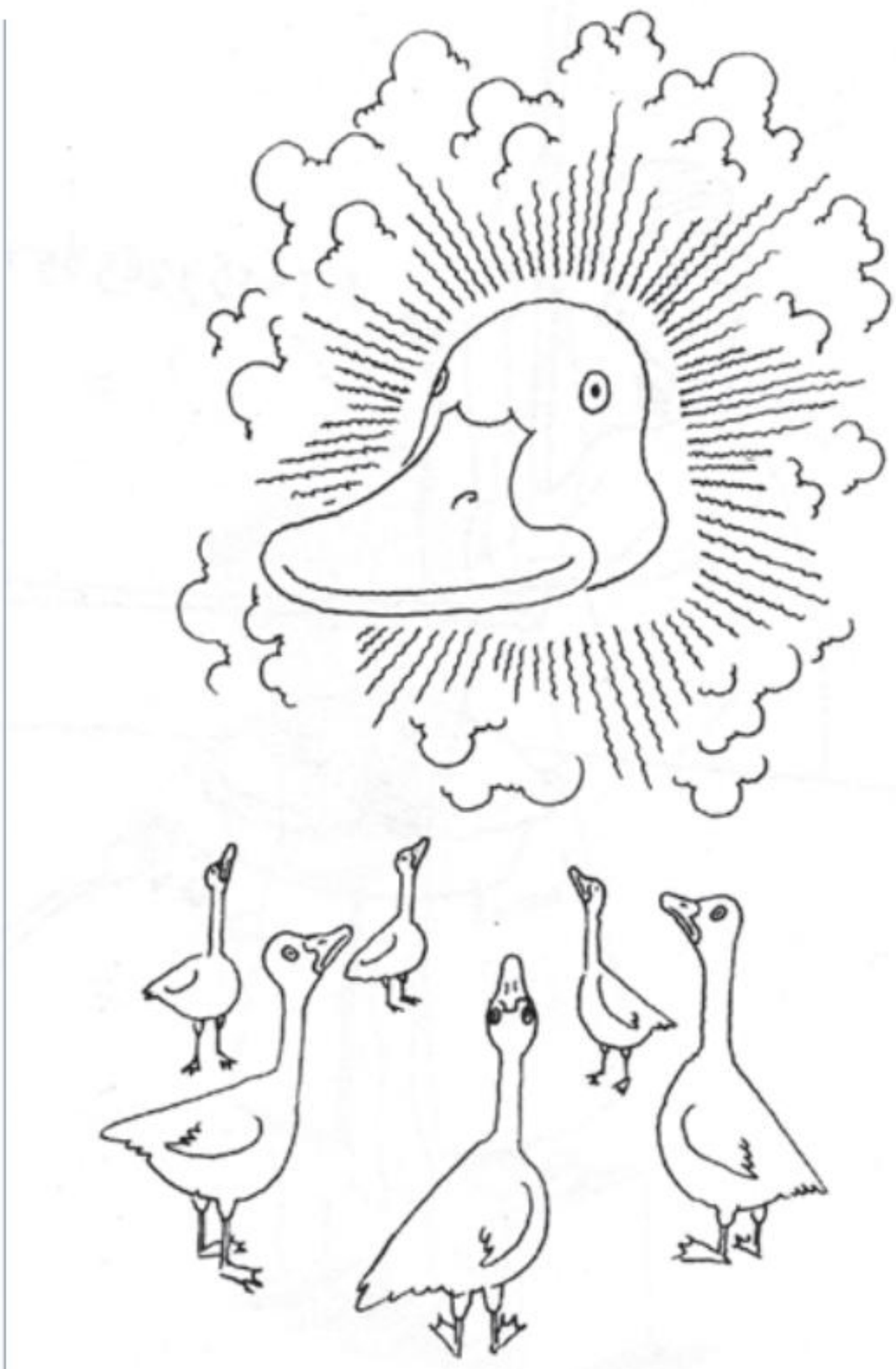
LIVE DADA DEVIL



PETS NIP INSTEP

TARZAN RAISED DESI ARNAZ' RAT



DO GEESE SEE GOD?

Elizabeth Darrow

By William Irvine

Elizabeth Darrow knew from an early age that she wanted to be an artist. "I always enjoyed painting as a kid and doing art assignments in school," she says. "In college I wanted to be in the studio all the time. That feeling carried over once I left school, so I kept on making art. I guess that makes me an artist!" Born in Hartford, Connecticut, she studied painting at Oberlin College and has lived in Wilmington since 1977, enough time that her work has taken many different directions.

"My art does not seem to have evolved in a linear way. I seem to circle around and return to a particular way of working for a time, then I'll move on to a different medium and things will change completely," she says. In the early 1980s, for instance, Darrow had a photorealist period: "The outcome was impressive, but the process was not exciting—even tedious. I wanted the process to feel more alive, like a journey into the unknown . . . otherwise, what's the point?" She works in a variety of styles, depending on the medium. "I seem to move from oil painting to collage and back again, and often combine the two. The show I am having at Art in Bloom in August will showcase both my abstract collages and my figurative painting—two distinctly different bodies of work. You wouldn't think it was the same artist."

Yackety Yak, oil, oil pastel on canvas, 24" x 36"

Fly Away!, oil, oil pastel on canvas, 24" x 36"

Darrow's work is often imbued with humor (and sometimes an undercurrent of anxiety) and often features layers of pattern and lush colors. "Color is so exciting to me. It's like putting together just the right notes to get the sound you want. Rich and velvety is often the sound I'm after now in my figurative work, with people and animals in relation to one another.

"My only plan when embarking on a canvas is to layer colorful, gestural strokes that will set the stage for what is to come," she continues. "All the canvases in this show were painted over existing paintings of mine, and likely more than once — paintings that no longer resonated with me. There is quite a buildup of paint that lends its voice to the texture of these pieces now — they've been through a lot and it shows."

In addition to showing at Art in Bloom, Darrow has work in many private collections and institutions,

Strays, oil, oil pastel on canvas, 36" x 24"

Magnetic Man, oil, oil pastel on canvas, 36" x 24"

Solidarity, oil, oil pastel on canvas, 24" x 18"

including those of Mr. and Mrs. David Rockefeller Jr., the Cameron Art Museum, the Wilson Center and the corporate collections of R.J. Reynolds, Lowe's and NationsBank, among many others. She has also participated in many fundraisers at Landfall over the past decade to benefit organizations such as the New Hanover Humane Society, the Butterfly House at Airlie Gardens, and the N.C. Coastal Land Trust.

Ultimately for Darrow, it's all about the process: "Images come to mind, and one thing leads to another as I play with color, shapes and design. In the tradition of Abstract Expressionism, discovery comes through the process itself."

"Fresh Take: New Art by Elizabeth Darrow" will be on view from Aug. 3 - 25 at Art in Bloom Gallery, 210 Princess St., Wilmington. For more information, call (484) 885-3037.

With Mother, oil, oil pastel on canvas, 36" x 36"

The Informants, oil, collage, oil pastel on canvas, 24" x 36"

A House of Welcome

A literary beacon plants its flags on Wrightsville Avenue

By Virginia Holman

This past spring, I received an invitation to the grand opening of Athenian House, the new home of Athenian Press and Workshops. When I looked closely at the invitation, I felt a bit of anxiety. It looked like it was an organization for women writers, LGBTQ writers, femme-identified writers, writers of color, and gender-nonconforming writers. I only knew one person who would be there, and I wasn't sure if this event and this place were really for me or someone like me. Would I be welcome as a straight white woman writer? Then I figured that I must be welcome; after all, I was invited. So on a cold and blustery March day, my husband and I went to the festive opening event.

As it turned out, we had a great time, and we couldn't have felt more at home. Athenian Press and Workshops hosts events that welcome all people, and although that sounds simple on the face of it, it's actually a pretty big deal. Fortunately, Athenian's co-founders, former Oxford University Press editor Lori Wilson and playwright and poet Khalisa Rae, author of *Real Girls Have Real Problems*, are passionate and ambitious. Along with Alicia Thacker, their programming director, they know that the feelings I experienced in a very real but small way — that is, wondering if I would be accepted for who I am, wondering if I would be welcomed and valued as I am — is an experience that many people of color, LGBTQ people, and gender-nonconforming people endure almost every day. Sometimes, they may have cause to fear for their safety. As for me, once at Athenian House, I found that I was just as welcome as anyone else, and vice versa. The experience gave me a tiny bit of insight into the lives of people who find they must constantly gauge whether or not they will be accepted just as they are — in their families, at work, when they meet new people, and when they go to a new place.

That, in all its brilliant simplicity, is the driving mission of Athenian Press and Workshops. Athenian aims to create a welcoming safe space on the page, at spoken word events, and in their outreach campaigns to ensure that those who have been traditionally marginalized are both supported and well represented.

Athenian knows that in order to fully realize their mission, visibility and outreach are key. So outside their current offices on Wrightsville Avenue, they have hung a lot of flags as a sign of welcome to people who might not otherwise hear about and discover Athenian. The flags include two rainbow or pride flags — the traditional rainbow flag and one that includes a brown and black stripe — a trans flag, and a Black Lives Matter flag. "We want passersby to know that they are welcome here and the flags are a form of outreach," Thacker says. They've been an effective one. "Sometimes people pull into the parking lot and come through the doors just to check out the space," she continues, "because they know they will be welcome, and they want to know what we're doing."

Thacker always tells people that "Athenian House is a safe space where people who enter know they can come in no matter what their expression is, what type of art they create, what they wear, how they feel, or what their experiences are. We tell them that they are coming into a place where all of that is accepted, all of that is honored and treasured here, without the fear of judgment, and without the fear of not being accepted."

> *"Athenian House is a safe space where people who enter know they can come in no matter what their expression is, what type of art they create, what they wear, how they feel, or what their experiences are."*

Rae echoes this, and points out that there is a huge effort to represent "those who have been silenced and othered" throughout the house — in the art, in the books in the bookstore and resource center, in the conversations that can be had, as well as with event speakers, open mics, and literary workshops.

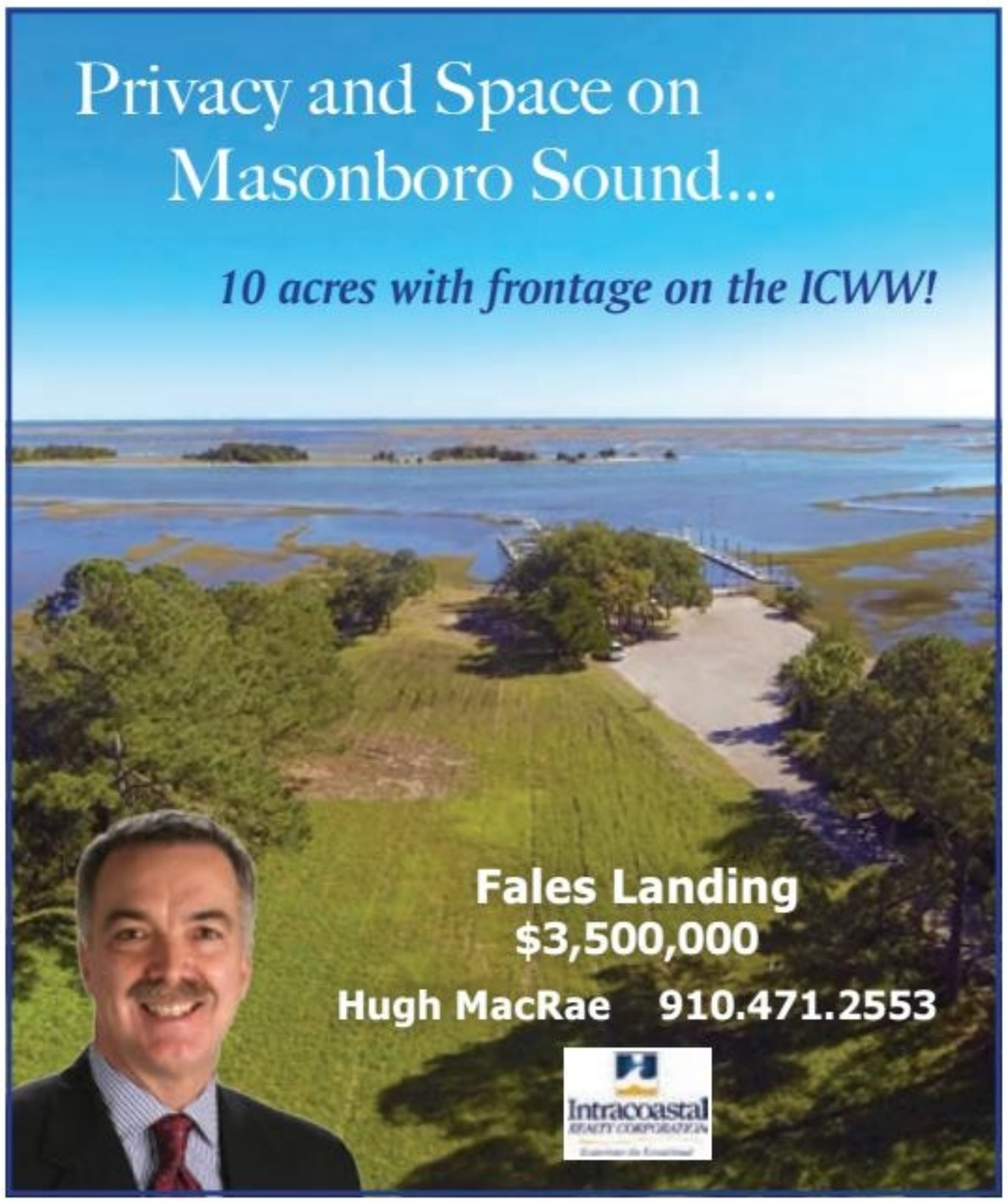
Athenian prides itself on its popular and well-attended monthly literary readings, trivia nights and curated "Femme Speak Out" events, which introduce compelling new literary voices, musicians and performers to the Wilmington arts scene. Athenian is also hard at work behind the scenes in Wilmington. Rae and Thacker both have ample experience in the nonprofit sector, and they've been partnering with nonprofits like LINC (a program that helps released prisoners re-enter the general population) and the Domestic Violence Shelter to provide writing as healing workshops to those in need. In addition, they've begun talks with public and private schools to increase access to creative writing instruction. And if that isn't enough, Athenian Press offers writers searching for thoughtful writing evaluation, editorial guidance and book design, including skilled one-on-one guidance. Their commitment has the backing of

PHOTOGRAPH UPPER LEFT AND LOWER RIGHT BY MIKE KIANKA

LuLu Press, a publisher in the Raleigh-Durham area, who will work with Athenian to help them publish their first books.

Athenian knows that its mission is one that's new to Wilmington, and that its victories are ones that aren't often immediately quantifiable. That's because Athenian changes lives, one life at a time, over time. Wilson mentions a recent experience that touched her: "Someone said that we are the only place where people use the correct pronouns that they choose. At Athenian, when we talk about gender variance, we talk about how important it is to respect people's chosen pronouns. In this case, the person was assigned female at birth but is gender- nonconforming and prefers the pronouns *they* and *their* instead of *she*." Rae says it's important for people to "ask me for my pronouns." It sounds a little awkward at first, but when you pause to think about how bewildering and upsetting it would feel if you were routinely assumed to be someone you were not, and called by the wrong pronoun, it makes perfect sense. It's the sort of common courtesy that one might someday find in a guide to good manners. Until then, we're lucky to have Athenian in town, inviting us to stop by, talk, and learn from one another.

Author Virginia Holman lives and writes in Carolina Beach.



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ALMANAC

August

By Ash Alder

I almost wish we were butterflies and lived but three summer days – three such days with you I could fill with more delight than fifty common years could ever contain. – John Keats

Remember meeting that first giant? Being dazzled beyond words by its radiance and splendor, gasping as if you'd just entered a world alive with magic beans and singing harps and ornate birds with eggs of gold?

Or perhaps you met a field of them? Smiling sun gazers. Stilt walkers among a carnival of phlox and zinnias and late summer bloomers. Nothing says August like a host of majestic sunflowers. As they follow our blazing sun across the wispy-clouded sky, these towering beauties remind us that we, too, become that which we give our attention.

Listen for the soft thuds of the earliest apples. Notice the silent dance of the spiraling damselfly, wild raspberries, the star-crossed romance between milkweed and goldenrod.

Queen Anne's lace adorns roadside ditches and, in the kitchen, fresh mint and watermelon smoothies await sun-kissed children still dripping from the pool. "Can we grow our own?" they ask, eyes still aglow from the cheerful band of sunflowers they saw at a friend's house days ago.

Come spring, as they work the magic seeds into the cool soil, all the world will sing.

Food for Thought

The dog days are still here. According to the *Old Farmer's Almanac*, the hottest days of summer coincide with the rising of Sirius, the Dog Star, beginning July 3 and ending Aug. 11.

Meantime, sit beneath the shade of a favorite tree.

Sink your teeth into a just-picked peach.

Lose yourself in a tangle of wild blackberries.

And as you watch the busy ants march along empty watermelon rinds and overripe berries, remember there is work to do.

Stake the vines.

Can or freeze excess of the harvest.

Prepare the soil for autumn plantings: purple top turnips and Chinese cabbages; Ebenezer onions and cherry belle radishes; spider lilies and autumn crocus and greens, greens, greens.

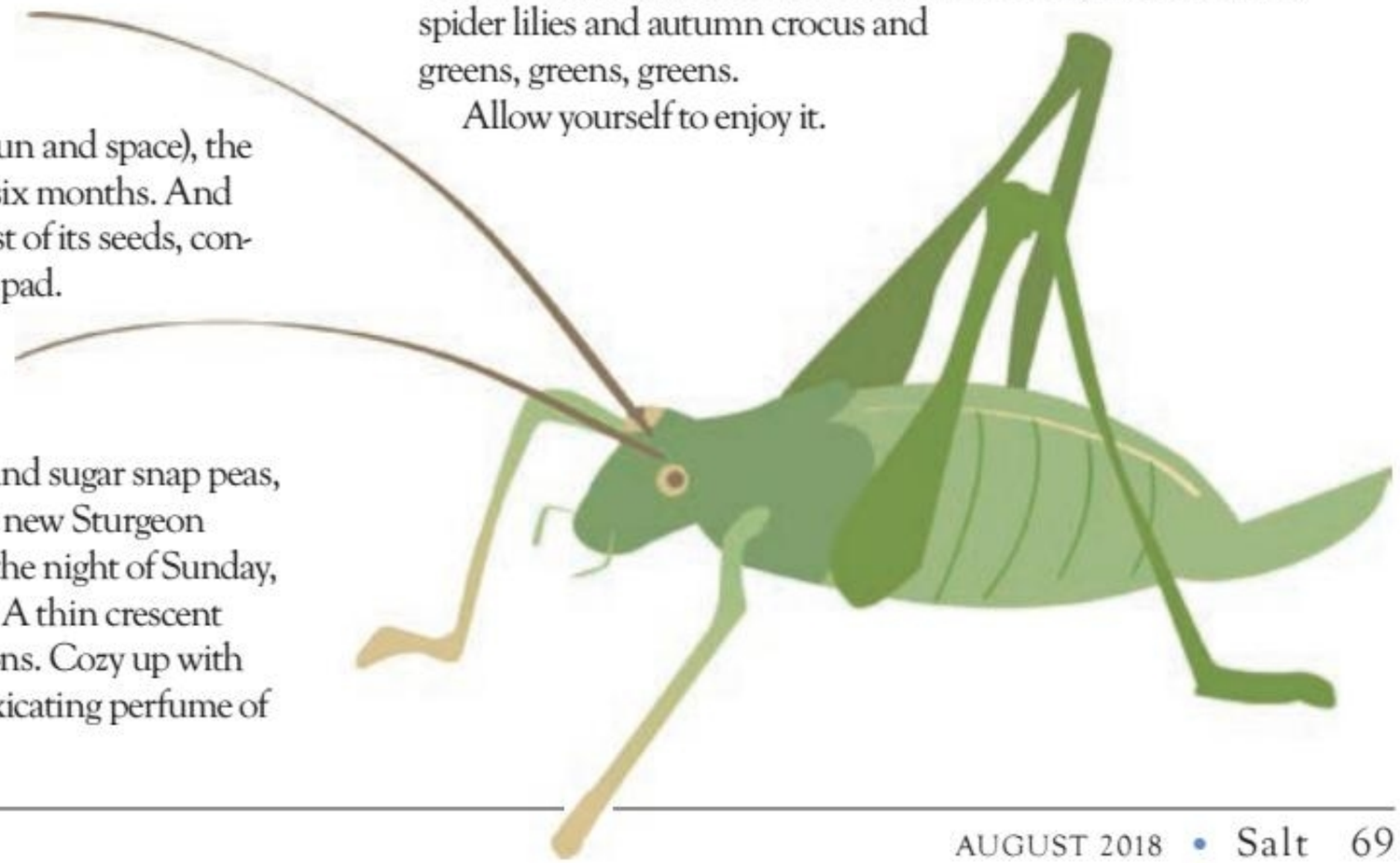
Allow yourself to enjoy it.

Good Clean Fun

Given optimal growing conditions (plenty of sun and space), the sunflower can grow up to 13 feet tall in as few as six months. And once summer and her birds have harvested the last of its seeds, consider using the head as a biodegradable scrubbing pad.

Cozy with the Crickets

Sure as the summer garden yields sweet corn and sugar snap peas, the Perseid meteor shower returns. Following the new Sturgeon moon on Aug. 11, the annual show will peak on the night of Sunday, Aug. 12, until the wee hours of Monday, Aug. 13. A thin crescent moon should make for excellent viewing conditions. Cozy up with the crickets. Believe in magic. Breathe in the intoxicating perfume of this summer night.



Arts Calendar

Boogie in the Park

Steel Magnolias

We Just Want to Play Volleyball Tournament

8/5

8/1 - 19 Sunset Boulevard

8 p.m. Thalian Hall presents the musical *Sunset Boulevard*, the classic film noir tale of faded silent film star Norma Desmond and her encounter with a young screenwriter, Joe Gillis. Lush musical score by Andrew Lloyd Webber. Tickets: $32. Thalian Hall, 310 Chestnut St., Wilmington. For information: (910) 632-2285 or thalianhall.org.

8/5 Run for the Light 5K, 10K and 1-mile Fun Run

6 p.m. Take a run through the coastal dunes and maritime forest of Bald Head Island to benefit the Old Baldy Lighthouse. The daylong celebration of National Lighthouse Day features BBQ, craft beer, crafts, games and more. Admission: $50. 101 Light House Wynd, Bald Head Island. For more information: (910) 457-7481 or oldbaldy.org.

8/5 Boogie in the Park

5 - 7 p.m. Bring your chair and blanket and enjoy this free concert series in Ocean Front Park. August entertainment is the bluegrass band South of K. Admission: Free. Ocean Front Park, Kure Beach. For information: townofkurebeach.org.

8/7 Walking Tour of Carolina Beach Boardwalk

10 a.m. The Federal Point Historic Preservation Society hosts a tour of Carolina Beach's historic Boardwalk. Learn the true history of the Shag, the story of Britt's Donuts, and more fun facts. Donation: $5. Meet at Boardwalk on the southwest corner by the new Hampton Inn. For more info: (910) 458-0502 or federal-point-history.org.

8/10-12

8/9 Jazz at the Mansion

6:30 p.m. Bring your blankets, lawn chairs and coolers and chill on the lawn of the Bellamy Mansion to the sounds of the Julia Walker Quartet. Beer and wine available. Admission: $10-$18. Bellamy Mansion Museum, 503 Market St., Wilmington. For information: (910) 251-3700 or bellamymansion.org.

8/9 - 11 Little Explorers Nature Program

10-11 a.m. Come to Halyburton Park for the Little Explorers Nature Program, which offers children ages 2 to 5 a variety of nature activities, including stories, songs, hikes and crafts. Pre-registration is required. Admission: $3. Halyburton Park, 4099 S. 17th St., Wilmington. For information: (910) 341-0075 or halyburtonpark.com.

8/10 - 12 Steel Magnolias

7:30 p.m. Thalian Association Community Theatre presents a production of *Steel Magnolias*, the story of six Southern women who share the ups and downs of their lives at Truvy's Beauty Salon in Chinquapin, Louisiana. Tickets: $15 to $25. Cape Fear Academy, 3900 S. College Road, Wilmington. For more information: (910) 251-1788 or thalian.org.

8/11

8/11 We Just Want to Play Volleyball Tournament

10 a.m. Put a team together and come down to Capt'n Bill's Backyard Grill for the second annual We Just Want to Play Volleyball Tournament, a daylong event featuring volleyball, cornhole, arts and crafts and an art fair to benefit the band program at New Hanover High School. Admission: Free for spectators. Registration: $80 for a four-man team till August 4; $100 thereafter. Capt'n Bill's Backyard Grill, 4240 Market St., Wilmington. For more info: nhhswildcatbandandboosters@gmail.com.

8/12 Life Rolls On

7 a.m. - 4 p.m. This nonprofit group, devoted to improving the lives of those with spinal injuries, will host They Will Surf Again, a day on the water in Carolina Beach. Volunteers and people of all ages with disabilities are welcome. Registration deadline for participants and volunteers in August 1. Admission: Free. 2 Carolina Beach Ave. N., Carolina Beach. See website to register and for full schedule of events. For information: liferollson.org.

8/12 - 13 Wrightsville Beach Wahine Classic

A Wrightsville surfing tradition, the Wahine Classic is for all levels of female surfers, amateur to pro. Divisions include pro shortboard and pro longboard, amateur shortboard and longboard,

Jazz Rendezvous Festival

8/17-18

Wilmington Fur Ball

8/25

Dave Mason & Steve Cropper in Concert

8/28

and a stand-up paddle competition. Admission is free for spectators. Various entry fees for surfers. Access 37 and 38, south end of Wrightsville Beach. For information and registration: wahineclassic.com.

8/14 Touch Tank Tuesday

10 a.m. - 1 p.m. Come to the Fred and Alice Stanback Coastal Education Center for a chance to view local plants and animals of our coastal waters. Activities include viewing of organisms under a microscope and board games related to the ecosystem. Admission: Free. Donations benefit the North Carolina Coastal Federation's educational programs. 309 W. Salisbury St., Wrightsville Beach. For information: (910) 509-2838 or nccoast.org.

8/17 Port City Jerry Garcia Day

7 p.m. The City of Wilmington and Edward Teach Brewing present the inaugural Port City Jerry Garcia Day, featuring the music of two Grateful Dead tribute bands, The Possums and Wavy Train. Cash bar. Proceeds benefit the United Way of the Cape Fear area. Admission: $10. Brooklyn Arts Center, 516 N. Fourth St., Wilmington. For more information: (850) 549-7890 or brooklynartsnc.com.

8/17 - 19 O'Neill/Sweetwater Pro-Am Surf Fest

8 a.m. The O'Neill/Sweetwater Pro-Am is one of the largest surfing contests on the East Coast. The three-day event attracts surfers from around the world. Registration closes August 15th. Admission: Free for spectators. Various entry fees for participating surfers. Oceanic Street, Wrightsville Beach. For information and to register: sweetwatersurfshop.com.

8/17 - 18 Jazz Rendezvous Festival

5 p.m. The inaugural Jazz Rendezvous Festival takes place at Greenfield Lake Amphitheater this weekend, featuring performances by Phil Denty, Oli Silk, Althea Rene, Jeanette Harris, and Jackiem Joyner, among others. Tickets: $55 - $100. Greenfield Lake Amphitheater, 1941 Amphitheater Drive, Wilmington. For more information: (76) 453-3398 or jazz-rendezvous.com.

8/18 Cemetery Flashlight Tour

8 p.m. - 10 p.m. Join Oakdale Cemetery Superintendent Eric Kozen and local historians Chris Fonvielle and Robin Triplett for a flashlight tour of Oakdale, North Carolina's oldest rural graveyard. Hear about the lives of Civil War veterans and prominent citizens of Wilmington buried here. Tour canceled in the event of rain. Bring your own flashlight. Admission: $15. Oakdale Cemetery, 520 N. 15th St., Wilmington. For information: (910) 762-5682 or oakdalecemetery.org.

8/23 Live Music and Fireworks Display

6:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m. Carolina Beach hosts live music by Painted Man and a fireworks display over the Boardwalk. Admission: Free. Carolina Beach Boardwalk, Cape Fear Boulevard, Carolina Beach. For more information: (910) 458-8434 or pleasureislandnc.org.

8/25 Cycle For Youth Science Bike-A-Thon

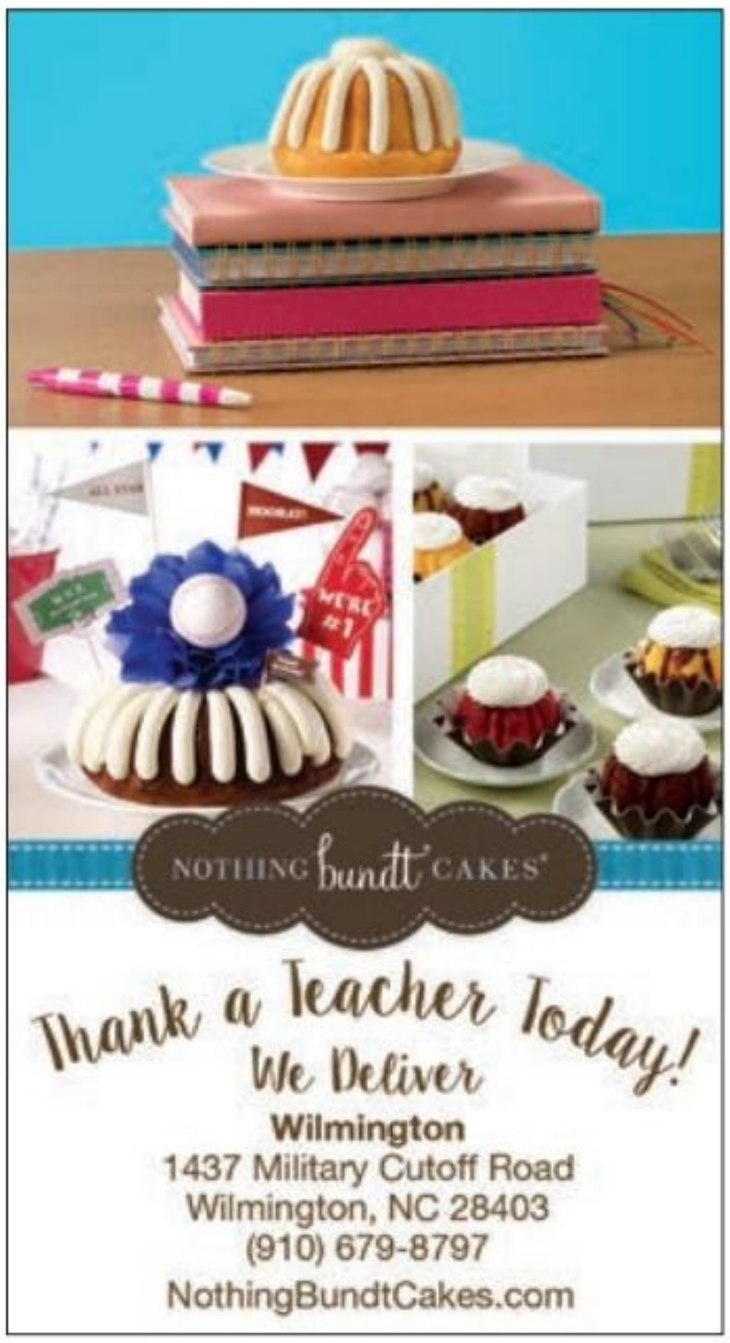
8 a.m - 10:30 a.m. This community fundraiser benefits the Young Scientist Academy and Bike for Every Child. Registered participants raise funds based on miles cycled for the event. Registration fee: $30 till August 10; $40 thereafter. Greenfield Lake Park, 301 Willard St. For more information and to register: (910) 386-1867 or youngscientistacademy.org.

8/25 Last Chance for White Pants

7 p.m. Audi Cape Fear presents the Last Chance for White Pants Gala, a benefit for the Lower Cape Fear Hospice Foundation's services and programs,which include hospice and palliative care and bereavement services for children and adults. Tickets: $150. 255 Old Eastwood Road, Wilmington. For information: lcfhospicefoundationorg.

8/25 Wilmington Fur Ball

6:30 p.m. The 13th annual Fur Ball benefits ani-



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mal rescue groups in New Hanover, Brunswick, and Pender counties. There will be a silent auction and live music provided by the Bibis Ellison Band. Tickets: $100 each. 1826 Sir Tyler Drive, Wilmington. For tickets and additional information: wilmingtonfurball.com.

8/24 - 26 — 13, The Musical

3 p.m.; 6 p.m. The Performance Club of Wilmington's summer stock series presents *13*, a musical about fitting in and growing up. The Performance Club is Wilmington's only studio theater company for young actors. The musical features a rock score from Tony Award-winning composer Jason Robert Brown. Admission: $15. Ruth and Bucky Stein Theatre, 310 Chestnut St. For information: (910) 632-2285 or thalianhall.org.

8/26 — Lumina Daze

5:30 - 9 p.m. Get into the swing of things at Lumina Daze, a dance party and silent auction to benefit the Wrightsville Beach Museum. There will also be a swing dance contest with live music provided by Wilmington Big Band Dixieland All-Stars as well as beach music with The Imitations. Tickets: $35 each. Blockade Runner Beach Resort, 275 Waynick Blvd., Wrightsville Beach. For information: (910) 256-2569.

8/28 — Dave Mason & Steve Cropper in Concert

6 p.m. Greenfield Lake Amphitheater is the setting for the sounds of Traffic legend Dave Mason and Steve Cropper, one of the founders of Booker T and the MGs. Opening act is Gretchen Rhodes. Doors open at 5 p.m. Tickets: $57.50 - $85. Greenfield Lake Amphitheater, 1941 Amphitheater Drive, Wilmington. For information: (910) 332-0983 or greenfieldlakeamphitheater.com.

WEEKLY HAPPENINGS

Monday

Wrightsville Farmers Market

8 a.m. – 1 p.m. Curbside beach market offering a variety of fresh, locally grown produce, baked goods, plants and unique arts and crafts. Seawater Lane, Wrightsville Beach. Info: (910) 256-7925 or www.townofwrightsvillebeach.com.

Tuesday

Wine Tasting

6 p.m. – 8 p.m. Free wine tasting hosted by a wine professional plus small plate specials all night. Admission: Free. The Fortunate Glass, 29 S. Front St., Wilmington. Info: (910) 399-4292 or www.fotunateglass.com.

Cape Fear Blues Jam

8 p.m. A night of live music performed by the area's best Blues musicians. Bring your instrument and join in the fun. Admission: Free. The Rusty Nail, 1310 S. Fifth Ave., Wilmington. Info: (910) 251-1888 or www.capefearblues.org.

Wednesday

Free Wine Tasting at Sweet n Savory Cafe

5 p.m. – 8 p.m. Sample delicious wines for free. Pair them with a meal, dessert, or appetizer and learn more about the wines of the world. Live music starts at 7. Admission: Free. Sweet n Savory Cafe, 1611 Pavilion Place, Wilmington. Info: (910) 256-0115 or www.swetnsavorycafe.com.

Weekly Exhibition Tours

1:30 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. A weekly tour of the iconic Cameron Arts Museum, featuring presentations about the various exhibits and the selection and installation process. Cameron Arts Museum, 3201 S. 17th St., Wilmington. Info: (910) 395-5999 or www.cameronartsmuseum.org.

Ogden Farmers Market

8 a.m. – 1 p.m. Local farmers, producers and artisans sell fresh fruits, veggies, plants, eggs, cheese, meat, honey, baked goods, wine, bath products and more. Ogden Park, 615 Ogden Park Drive, Wilmington. Info: (910) 538-6223 or www.wilmingtonandbeaches.com/events-calendar/ogden-farmers-market.

Poplar Grove Farmers Market

8 a.m. – 1 p.m. Open-air market held on the front lawn of historic Poplar Grove Plantation offering fresh produce, plants, herbs, baked goods and handmade artisan crafts. Poplar Grove Plantation, 10200 US Highway 17 N., Wilmington. Info: (910) 395-5999 or www.poplargrove.org/farmers-market.

Thursday

Wrightsville Beach Brewery Farmers Market

2 p.m. – 6 p.m. Come support local farmers and artisans every Thursday afternoon in the beer garden at the Wrightsville Beach Brewery. Shop for

eggs, veggies, meat, honey, and handmade crafts while enjoying one of the Brewery's tasty beers. Stay for live music afterwards. Admission: Free. Wrightsville Beach Brewery, 6201 Oleander Dr., Wilmington. Info: (910) 256-4938 or www.wb-beer.com.

Yoga at the CAM

12–1 p.m. Join in a soothing retreat sure to charge you up while you relax in a beautiful, comfortable setting. Sessions are ongoing and are open to both beginners and experienced participants. Admission: $5–8. Cameron Art Museum, 3201 S. 17th St., Wilmington. Info: (910) 395-5999 or www.cameronartmuseum.org.

Friday & Saturday

Cape Fear Museum Little Explorers

10 a.m. Meet your friends in Museum Park for fun, hands-on activities! Enjoy interactive circle time, conduct exciting experiments, and play games related to a weekly theme. Perfect for children ages 3 to 6 and their adult helpers. Admission: Free. Cape Fear Museum, 814 Market St., Wilmington. Info: (910) 798-4370 or www.capefearmuseum.com.

Blackwater Adventure Tours

Join in an educational guided boat tour from downtown Wilmington to River Bluffs, exploring the mysterious beauty of the Northeast Cape Fear River. See website for schedule. River Bluffs, 1100 Chair Road, Castle Hayne. Info: (910) 623-5015 or www.riverbluffsliving.com.

Saturday

Carolina Beach Farmers Market

8 a.m. – 1 p.m. Outdoor "island-style" market featuring live music and local growers, producers and artisans selling fresh local produce, wines meats, baked goods, herbal products and handmade crafts. Carolina Beach Lake Park, Highway 421 & Atlanta Avenue, Carolina Beach. Info: (910) 458-2977 or www.carolinabeachfarmersmarket.com.

Wilmington Farmers Market at Tidal Creek

8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Weekly gathering of vetted vendors with fresh produce straight from the farm. Sign up for the weekly newsletter for advanced news of the coming weekend's harvest. 5329 Oleander Drive, Wilmington. For info: thewilmingtonfarmersmarket.com.

Riverfront Farmers Market

8 a.m. – 1 p.m. Curbside market featuring local farmers, producers, artisans, crafters and live music along the banks of the Cape Fear River. Riverfront Park, N. Water St., Wilmington. Info: (910) 538-6223 or www.wilmingtondowntown.com/events/farmers-market.

Taste of Downtown Wilmington

2:15 p.m., 2:45 p.m., & 3:15 p.m. A weekly gourmet food tour by Taste Carolina, featuring some of downtown Wilmington's best restaurants. Each time slot showcases different food. See website for details. Admission: $55–75. Riverwalk at Market Street, Wilmington. Info: (919) 237-2254 or www.tastecarolina.net/wilmington/.

To add a calendar event, please contact calendar@saltmagazinenc.com. Events must be submitted by the first of the month, one month prior to the event.

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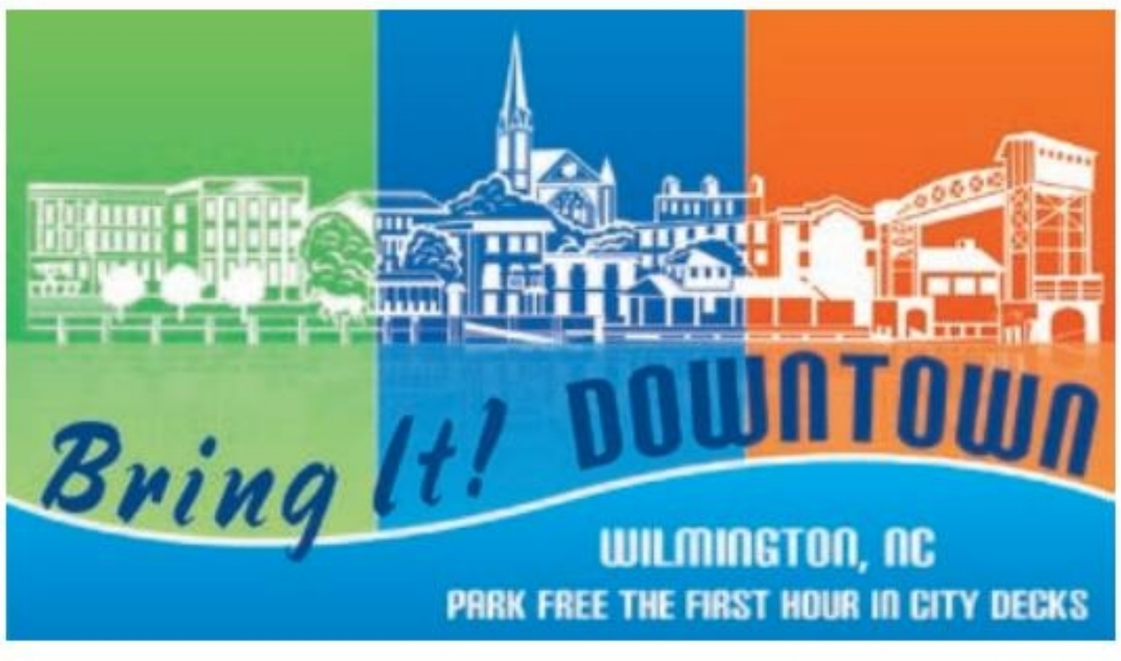

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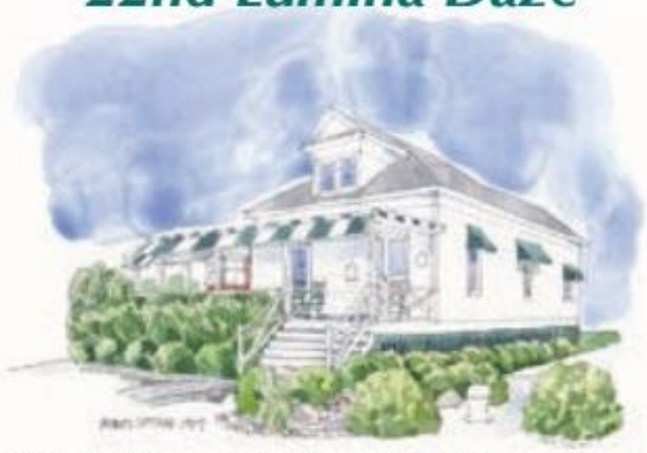
ARTS & CULTURE

Wrightsville Beach Museum of History's
22nd Lumina Daze



Do you like to dance? Love music? Treasure good times at our beach? Enjoy dancing under the stars? Then Lumina Daze is for you! Our yearly celebration of great music and the Wrightsville Beach community is coming up!

Sunday, August 26, 2018, 6-9 PM

At Blockade Runner Beach Resort

275 Waynick Boulevard, Wrightsville Beach, NC

Tickets: $35 each pre-event price. $45 at the door.

- **We have free Lemonade on the Porch all summer**
- **Kids Club programs every Wednesday at 10:30 through August**
- **Look for shark's teeth in the Play Area 24/7**

Restoration of the 1924 Bordeaux Cottage (to the left) is wrapping up. We are now in Phase 2 of our Capital Campaign to raise the funds to help us complete our goal - to be an excellent museum that is also the most fun and interesting place at Wrightsville Beach.

303 West Salisbury Street, Wrightsville Beach, NC 28480

910-256-2569 | wbmuseum@bizec.rr.com | www.wbmuseumofhistory.com

Harvest Dinner

at the Bellamy Mansion Museum

Thursday, September 27

6:00PM - 9:00PM

$150.00 per person

plus tax

Celebrate the fall bounty with an exclusive and exquisite multi-course meal prepared and presented by some of North Carolina's most celebrated chefs. Tickets include wine pairings and a unique brew by Wilmington Brewing Company. The event will also feature live music and a silent auction.

Space is limited and reservations are required.

Call Leslie at 910-251-3700 ext. 305 to reserve your seats today.

Chef Lydia Clopton — Love, Lydia Bakery, Wilmington, NC

Chef Dean Neff — PinPoint Restaurant, Wilmington, NC

Chef Ashley Capps — Buxton Hall BBQ, Asheville, NC

Chef Travis Schultz — Buxton Hall BBQ, Asheville, NC

A portion of each ticket supports educational programming at the Bellamy Mansion Museum

Port City People

Dining & Dancing on Water

Proceeds benefit Little Pink Houses of Hope:
Gifting breast cancer patents with dream vacations

Sunday, June 10, 2018

Photographs by Bill Ritenour

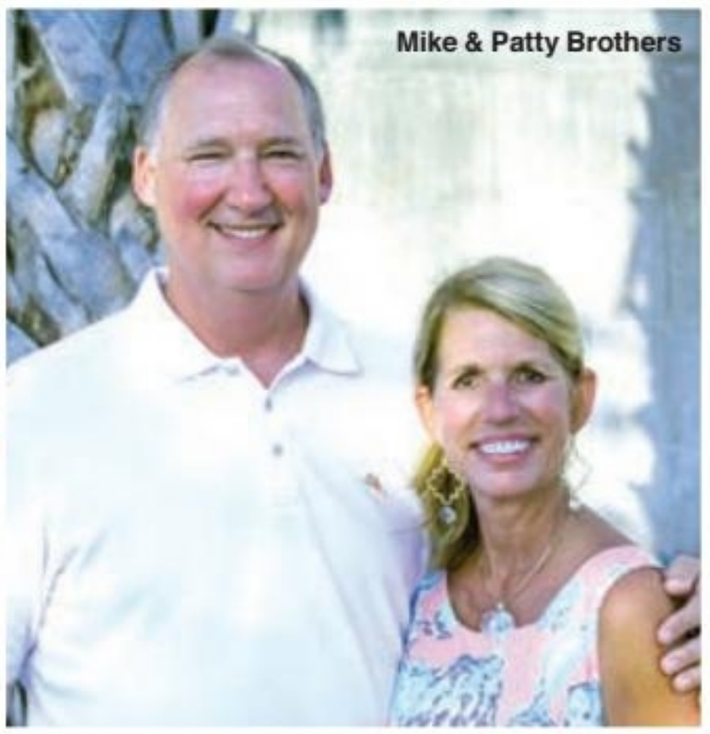
Michael Williamson, Jenny Wedenmeyer, Justin North

Lannin & Michael Braddock, Kristen & Chris LaCoe, Andrew Williams, Jenna Curry

Veronica & Mackenzie Wernicke

Jeannine Patten-Coble, Patrick Cogin

Chris & Shann Thomas, Keith & Suzanne Lundin

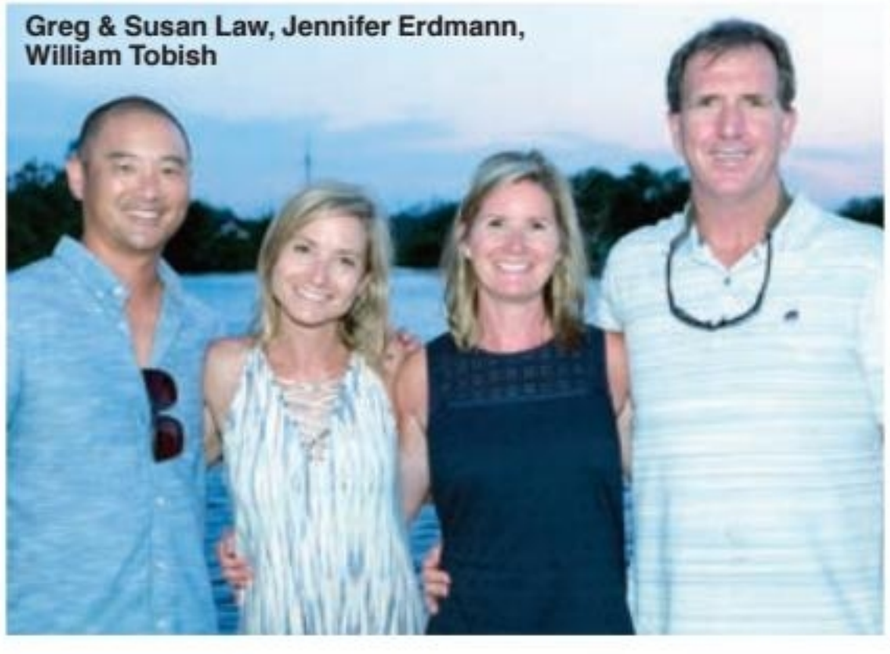

Mike & Patty Brothers

Karen Day, Matt & Connie Zmijewski

LeAnn Pierce, Janis & Paul Boroznoff, Noel & Ron Stevens

Shameena Broach, Mariska Truesdale

Lorraine Kellerman, Kenny Martin


Greg & Susan Law, Jennifer Erdmann, William Tobish

Kristina McLamb, Joe Tompkins

Port City People

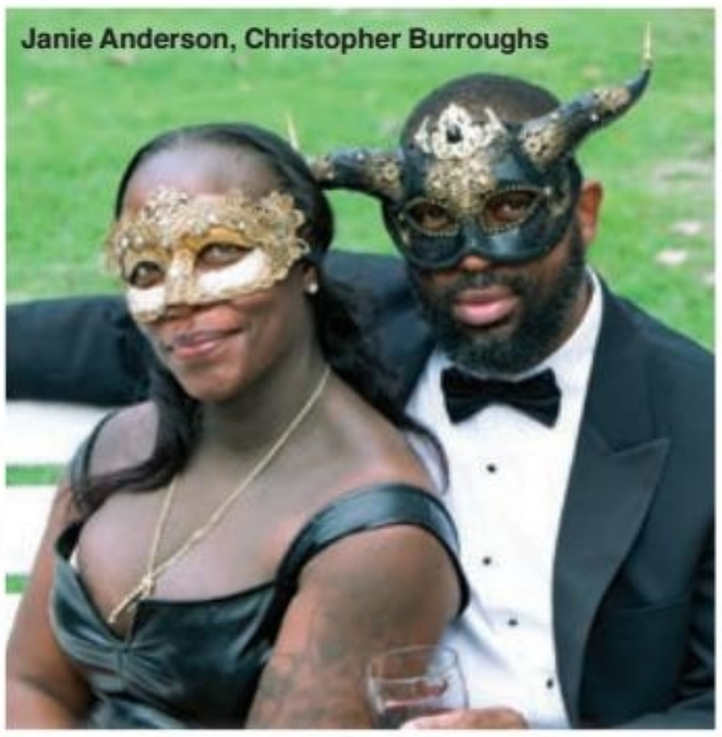
Wilmington Wine's First Annual Masquerade Bal

Benefit for Make-A-Wish Eastern NC

Friday, June 15, 2018

Photographs by Bill Ritenour

Dave & Laura Wilder, Charity Brown, Shawn & Tammy Swanson


Janie Anderson, Christopher Burroughs

Jessie Jordan, Nick Mijak

Jessica & Cameron Varney, Suzette & Kristopher Varney

Lynn & Craig Stinson

Jason & Lauren Boger

Danijela Zezelj-Gualdi, Karla & Royce Nobles

Lisa Morris, Patty Williams

Ambria Morgan, Anya Babar

Alyssa Woods, Ben Phillips

Angela & Mark Kennedy

Mark & Sarah Demers

Kayla Stringfellow, Kylie Beinke

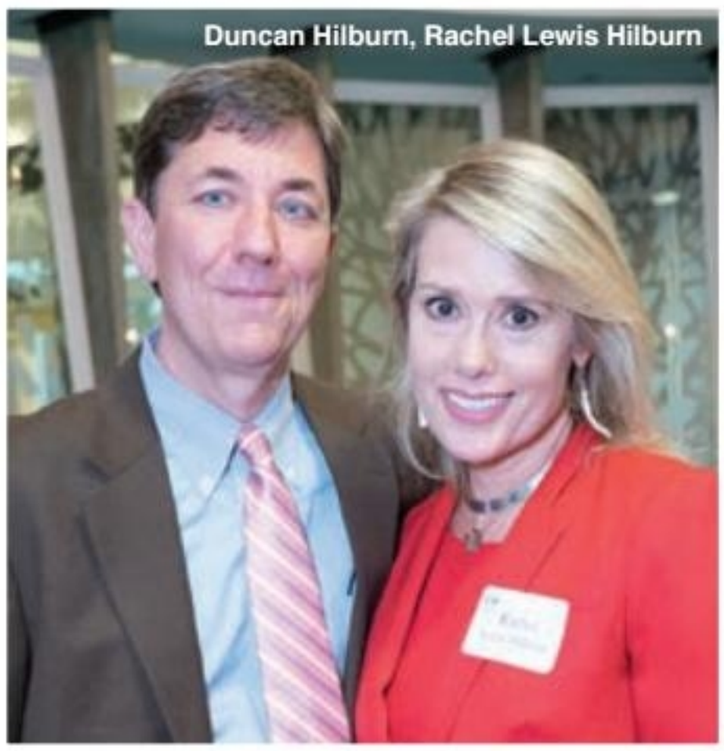
Port City People

WHQR's Friends of Public Radio, Inc.'s Annual Meeting

Held at tekMountain

Thursday, June 28, 2018

Photographs by Bill Ritenour


Duncan Hilburn, Rachel Lewis Hilburn

Barbara Bush, Mary Bradley, Kitty Yerkes

Kristine Moore, Robert Waxman

George Scheibner

Michelle Rhinesmith, Ned Glascock, Tim Costello

Fran Scarlett, MK Cote

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Wiley Cash, Cleve Callison, Lan Nichols

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Port City People

Cape Fear Alumni Summer Social

Hosted by UNCW Alumni Association

Thursday, July 12, 2018

Photographs by Bill Ritenour

Jennifer Stacks, Missy Kennedy, Lauren King

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Hayley Sink, Elizabeth Brunner

Edward Hall, Jenna Curry, Michael Franklin

Lindsey Johnson, Liz Carbone, Caroline Jacokes

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Cat's-paws, Cat's Meows and Mixed Nuts

In the height of Leo season, August brings a little bit of everything

By Astrid Stellanova

August birthdays for Leo and Virgo are something special. Even the stars will twinkle brighter! There's a partial solar eclipse (on the 13th – so Sugar, we get to shut it all down and focus on luminous Leos. Cat Nights begin on the 17th, and may tempt witches to trade their brooms for feline claws and tails, if our Irish seers are right. But, no lie or stretch of truth, August brings National Ice Cream Sandwich Day, National Raspberry Cream Pie Day and National Girlfriends Day. If days devoted to ice cream, pie or gal-pals don't grab you, then consider August 3 is International Beer Day . . .and Grab Some Nuts Day is conveniently the same date. Shew, Star Children, I cannot begin to tell you how many mixed nuts deserve to be roasted and canned this month. —Ad Astra, Astrid

Leo (July 23—August 22)
Here's the thing, Sugar. There's a good reason some friends just don't mix; you can't trust them anymore than you would trust a rooster crossed with a turkey buzzard or a goldendoodle crossed with a coyote. Things went cattywampus when two segmented parts of your life came together. To fix this situation, consider sorting out why and how this ever happened. For your birthday, someone is willing to retire a debt owed. And it isn't about the money.

Virgo (August 23—September 22)
Sugar, you are the straw that stirs the drink. Ain't nothing fun happening until you make the scene. Just looky, at how much social capital you have. Spread that stardust around to all your thirsty friends and stir something up.

Libra (September 23–October 22)
Your nemesis has an ego big enough to have its own ZIP code. This ticked some people off and they are ready to change sides and be your personal booster club. Keep your chin up and go high, Honey, if ever they go low.

Scorpio (October 23–November 21)
Don't get all tore up. You lost something you really didn't even want. If you can stop looking in the rearview mirror, you will find you actually like the approaching view right in front of you. Keep on keeping on, and don't allow yourself to break down in the tow zone.

Sagittarius (November 22–December 21)
Don't that just beat a hog playing the maracas? Here you had all the talent you ever needed to succeed at the very thing that makes your heart sing—and you questioned it forever. You have just accidentally found your way right side up.

Capricorn (December 22–January 19)
News that's tougher to swallow than canned biscuits and expired Spam has got you shaken. In the next 48 hours, you learned you really are up to the challenge. It just happens to look harder than it is. This won't bring you down.

Aquarius (January 20–February 18)
Yep, betrayal stung and you have hollered at the moon. Sooner or later, we all get to hike up to the crest of Fool's Hill. Now come on back down. When you do – wiser, stronger, better – ain't nobody getting your goat again.

Pisces (February 19–March 20)
Whaaat? You're due for a come-to-Jesus meeting with reality. If you think there's a conspiracy against you, Darling, you are just plain wrong. Spend your days and nights ignoring all those conspiracy theories and focusing on your God-given talents.

Aries (March 21–April 19)
You feel like you were either shot out of a cannon or torpedoed by a loose cannon? Shake it off, Buttercup. Times were, this one special someone could tie you up in knots, but not anymore. You have the power . . . so take it and use it.

Taurus (April 20–May 20)
The last person you forgave was safely buried before you got around to letting go. Not that you are mean, but you sure do know how to hold a grudge. Resentment is a poisoned well. Stop lowering the bucket and drinking what is just plain toxic.

Gemini (May 21–June 20)
Look a little closer. Give it the hairy eyeball: The wheel may be turning but the rat is dead. Stop the whole business of trying to force something to work. When the path is truly clear – and it will clear soon, Honey – you will not struggle anymore.

Cancer (June 21–July 22)
Here's the dilemma. You're gonna have to burn that bridge or walk across it. That bridge. Set it on fire and you are done with all those old connections. If you walk across, you make new connections that didn't get scorched. Free yourself, Darling.

For years, Astrid Stellanova owned and operated Curl Up and Dye Beauty Salon in the boondocks of North Carolina until arthritic fingers and her popular astrological readings provoked a new career path.

Git-R-Done

And in record time, to boot

By Susan S. Kelly

My sister thinks I'm OCD, but it's not that at all. Now, I'll admit to, in my young mother days, putting a notepad at the top of the steps to write down how many times in a single day I went upstairs and downstairs, but I was merely collecting sociological and scientific statistics. No, my husband, who folds his eyeglasses cleaning cloth six times before replacing it in the little plastic case, and the guy in the pew in front of me at church who takes out the hymnal and smooths the tiny folds in the page corners where they've been carelessly creased, are both closer to OCD than me. (Though, during the next overlong sermon, I'm going to do that, too.) My issue is CAD: Compulsive Achievement Disorder. I don't consider CAD a suffer-from syndrome, but a blessed-with aptitude.

You've got your PWE, Puritan Work Ethic, loosely defined as the fear that someone, somewhere, is having fun. And you've got your basic multitasking. Both are related to Compulsive Achievement Disorder. Because I do love me a list. Few things in life are as satisfactory as crossing off to-dos. Roundup weeds. Check. Pickup alterations. Check. Send bio to speaking gig. Check. Finish this writing piece. Check. Respond to that invitation. Check. But there exists an entire realm beyond typical daily errands. I'm talking scheduling the deletion of future unnecessary emails; planning ahead to refill the dishwashing liquid bottle from the mammoth Costco bottle; noting all upcoming weddings/baby showers/birthdays in back of the calendar so you're always on the lookout for gifts.

I mean, doesn't everyone time themselves on how fast, how efficiently, and with how many fewer steps and reaches it requires to unload a dishwasher?

Here is a classic two minutes in a CAD day: Empty bathroom trash can into bedroom trash can on the way to plugging in the phone charger that's beside the bedroom trash can on the way to putting the toilet paper plastic wrapping on the upstairs hall table to be taken downstairs for the recycling bag which is in the laundry closet and just go ahead and fill the laundry detergent for the next time you have a wash, turn to take the clean wine glasses off the drying pad, replace in the bar and check the mail on the desk beside the bar to see if anything that you've predated to send is ready to be sent. Two minutes. Tops.

There's some DNA to this CAD. I ran into my first cousin at the grocery store, and he showed me his list, which was arranged by *where the items came on the shelves*. Beyond that, he'd put asterisks beside the items that were on sale that week, and beyond that, he'd put stars by the items he had coupons for. Oversharing, perhaps, but there you are.

Sometimes, at supper, I'll say to my husband, "Do you want to know what I did today?" He says, "No, I know you're amazing." And I just have to live with that minor acknowledgement. Then I go upstairs and binge Netflix. Because I've earned my downtime.

Speaking of husbands, CAD is especially advantageous during, uh, disagreements and stalemates. You can always refill the saltshakers, clean out the fridge, make salad dressing or iced tea while you're refusing to speak. Bustle and busy-ness are terrific strategies for stonewalling.

Not that CAD doesn't come with drawbacks. Automatically reaching for the cards to shuffle them when it's not your turn to shuffle irritates by-the-rules bridge players. And it's tiresome to have to dust off presents you wrapped weeks before. Of course, you have to find where you hid them first. That's senior CAD.

Rather than some mental problem, I'm going to lay this issue at the feet of all the movies I watched as a child. Mary Poppins did five things at a time—though she had bluebirds to help her—and Snow White had her seven dwarfs, and especially *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang* when Dick Van Dyke cooked breakfast eggs on a fabulously complicated machine.

Call it what you want. I'm getting it done.

Susan Kelly is a blithe spirit and an open book, or reading one.

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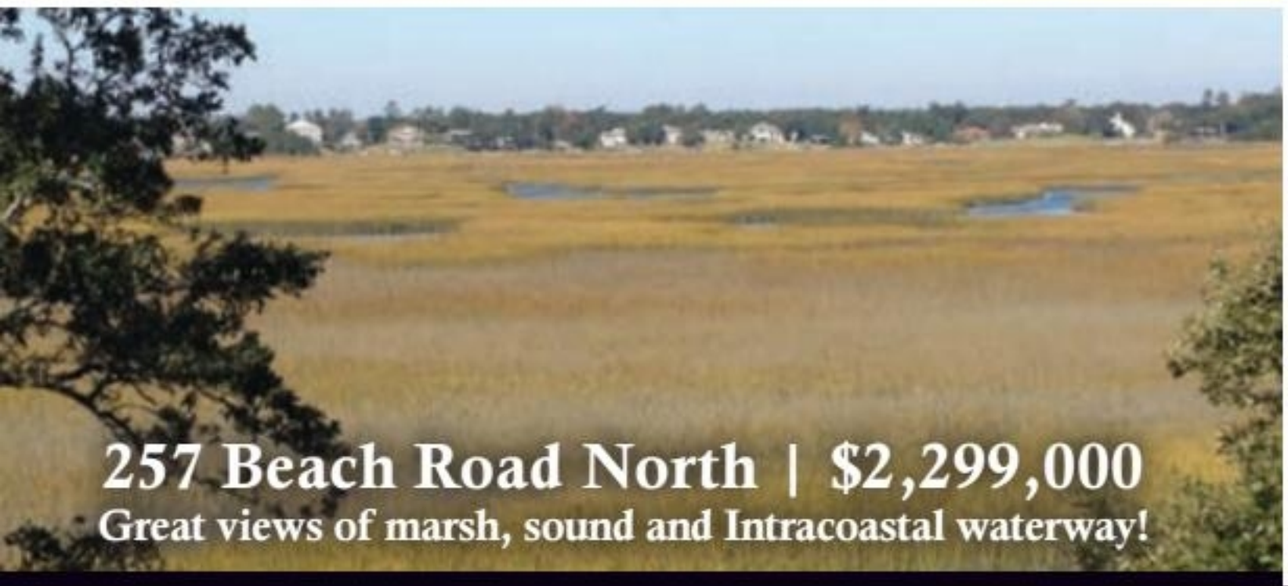

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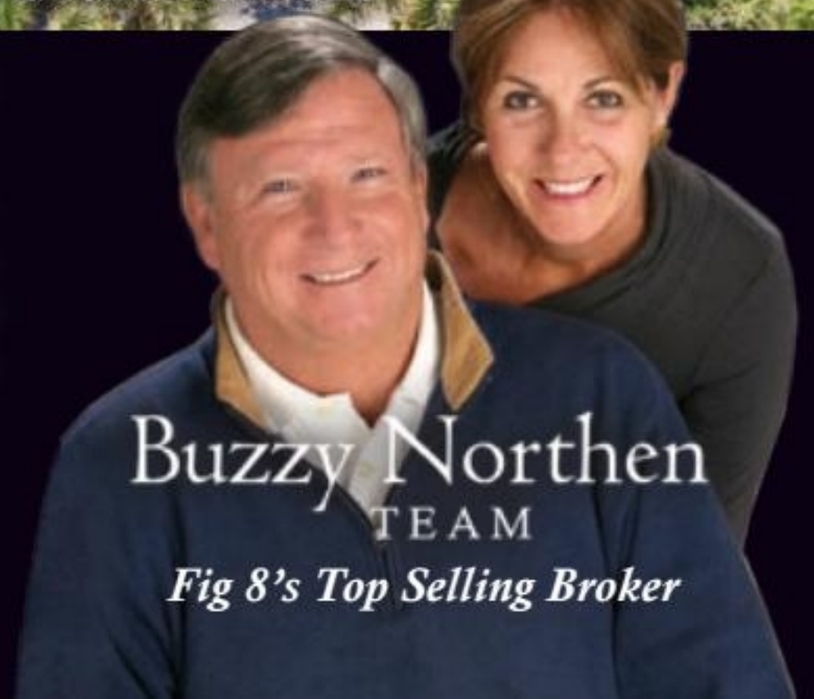

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